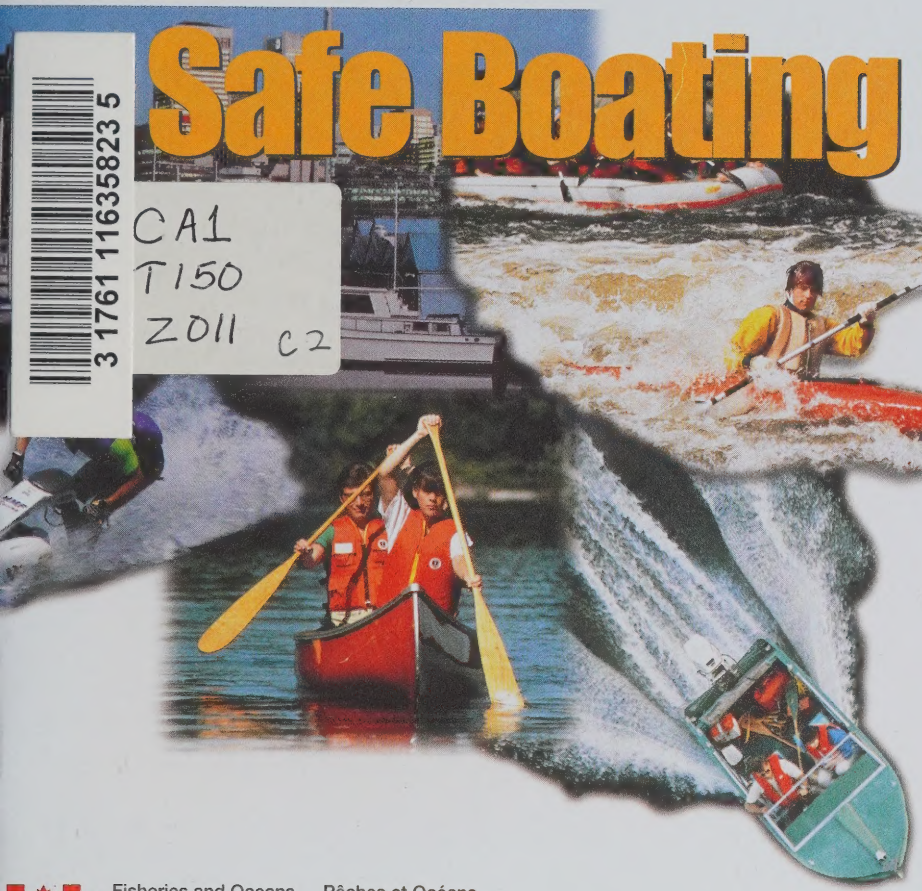
Safe Boating Guide

Your Guide to Regulations and Responsible Recreational Boating



Inside: What's new on April 1,

1999

- **Operator Competency – who has to have proof?**
- **New safety precautions**
- **Horsepower restrictions for operators under 16**
- **New safety equipment requirements**

Canadian Coast Guard

Office of Boating Safety

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Pêches et Océans Canada

Canada

Changes to improve the responsible enjoyment of recreational boating:

Safe boating is everybody's responsibility. But as experienced boaters in Canada know, regulations governing boating safety have not kept pace with how recreational boating has changed in recent years. The proliferation of personal watercraft. More powerful vessels. New and competing forms of waterway activity. Improvements in vessel design. The advent of high tech navigational aides. Better safety equipment. All of these changes underscore the need to modernize current regulations.

Three years ago, the Canadian Coast Guard's Office of Boating Safety began consulting Canadians on ways of making our waters safer. Some 3,500 Canadians in 75 communities discussed such issues as: requiring operators of power boats to pass a safety test in order to operate vessels; imposing age restrictions on operators of power vessels; and, ways to better enforce existing regulations. At the same time, several hundred boating associations and thousands of boaters assessed proposals to improve the current *Small Vessel Regulations*. These proposals related to safety precautions and on-board safety equipment requirements designed to prevent accidents, and to save lives if accidents occurred.

These efforts produced a strong consensus for action. As a result of these extensive consultations, new and amended boating safety regulations were announced in January of 1999. This Guide takes account of these changes and explains in plain language how they will affect YOU!

If you operate a commercial small vessel — water taxi, sport-fishing charter, or tour boat — or operate a commercial small fishing vessel, contact Transport Canada to find out about the safety requirements that apply to your vessel.

! **WHAT'S NEW!**

Look for the "!" icon throughout this Guide to show you what's new or changed.

EMERGENCY — Marine Search and Rescue

POLLUTION — Marine Pollution Reporting

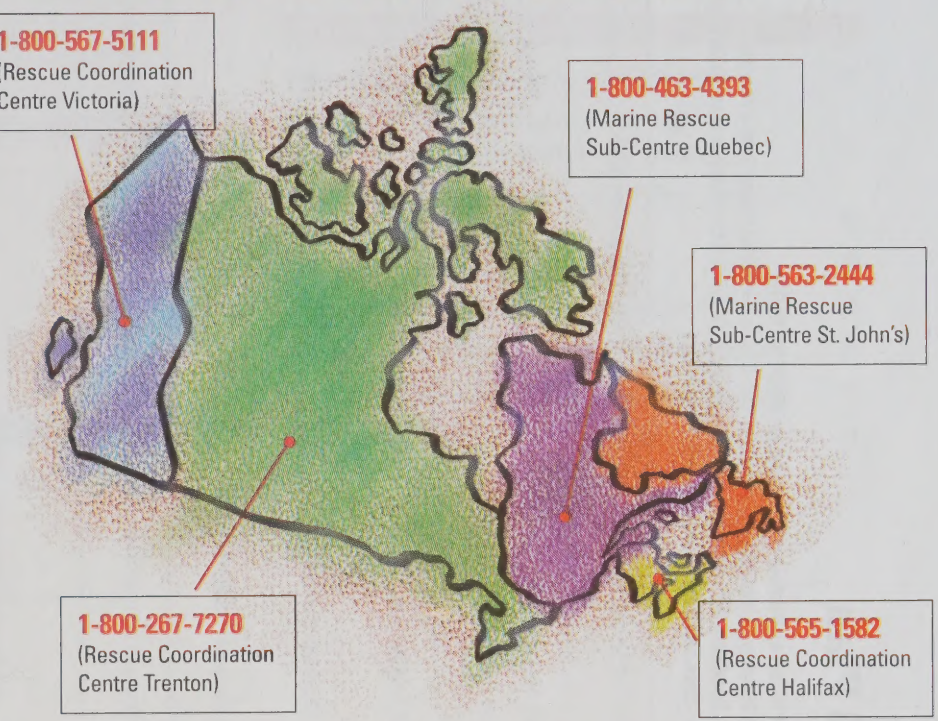
NEWFOUNDLAND
▶ 1-800-563-2444

P.E.I. – NOVA SCOTIA – NEW BRUNSWICK
▶ 1-800-565-1633

QUEBEC
▶ 1-800-363-4735

ONTARIO – MANITOBA – SASKATCHEWAN – ALBERTA – NORTHWEST TERRITORIES – NUNAVUT
▶ 1-800-265-0237

BRITISH COLUMBIA – YUKON
▶ 1-800-889-8852



Sail Plan

Step 1 – fill out applicable information for EACH VOYAGE
Step 2 – leave with responsible person or file with a Canadian Coast Guard Marine Communications and Traffic Service (MCTS) Centre by telephone, radio or in person
Step 3 – close sail plan upon termination of voyage

Owner's Name and Address _____ Telephone Number _____

_____

Vessel's Name and Licence Number _____ Sail _____ Power _____

Size and Type _____

Colour _____ Hull _____ Deck _____ Cabin _____

Type of Engine _____ Other Distinguishing Features _____

Radio Channels Monitored HF _____ VHF _____ MF _____

Safety Equipment on Board

Life Rafts _____ Dinghy or Small Boat (include colour) _____

Flares (include number and type) _____ Lifejackets or PFDs (include number) _____

Other _____

Search and Rescue Telephone Number _____

Trip Details ***(include these details every trip)***

Date of Departure _____ Time of Departure _____

Leaving From _____ Heading to _____

Proposed Route _____ Estimated Date and Time of Arrival _____

Stop Over Point _____ Number of Persons on Board _____

Stop Over Point _____

Introduction

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Safe Boats

Safe Waterways

For Further Information

Introduction

Using this Guide

This *Safe Boating Guide* provides up to date information on current regulations governing recreational boating, including those scheduled to come into force on April 1, 1999. Long time readers of the *Safe Boating Guide* will want to take particular note of new or changed regulations pertaining to operator competency, age-horsepower restrictions and safety equipment. Look for the "!" icon that indicates a new or changed requirement. **In the event of any discrepancy between the *Safe Boating Guide* and the regulations, the regulatory text shall remain the final authority.**

Information is organized into four sections — **Safe Boaters**, **Safe Boats**, **Safe Waterways**, and **For Further Information**. These sections are identified by a different colour index on the right-hand page.

Reading this Guide is not enough! The Canadian Coast Guard strongly recommends every boater take an *accredited boating safety course*.

Boating related incidents in Canada

Participation in recreational boating has increased dramatically in recent years. Between seven and nine million people enjoy Canadian waterways each year. Sadly, not every boating excursion is a return trip: the Canadian Red Cross and the Lifesaving Society of Canada, who jointly collect data on water-related fatalities, report over 200 boating fatalities annually — most of them preventable. Along with the devastating personal loss this represents, the economic effect for all of us is high. These figures do not include an estimated 6,000 unreported non-fatal incidents every year that involve serious personal injuries, property loss, or the risk of such catastrophes.

This Guide presents important information about boating regulations and other safety tips. The Canadian Coast Guard and boating community partners are working hard to encourage boaters to evaluate their capabilities and limits, to prepare themselves adequately before heading out and to be responsible on the water. We are undertaking many initiatives to make sure all your trips are return trips, but safe boating is a shared responsibility. You must also do your part before heading out and while on the water. Become informed and stay informed! ***Take an accredited boating safety course.***

Boating safety is everyone's responsibility — Your Canadian Coast Guard has services for the recreational boater

The Canadian Coast Guard, as part of Fisheries and Oceans, works to ensure the safe and environmentally responsible use of Canada's waterways. The women and men of the Canadian Coast Guard support the understanding and management of ocean resources, facilitate the use of our waters for shipping, recreation and fishing; and provide marine expertise in support of Canada's domestic and international interests. The Canadian Coast Guard provides many services to the recreational boater including search and rescue, marine communications, and a navigational aid system on the coasts, Great Lakes and the St Lawrence River.

Office of Boating Safety

The Office of Boating Safety, established in 1995, provides the recreational boating community with an improved focus within the Canadian Coast Guard on boating matters. Working closely with that community, it delivers prevention-based programs to reduce the safety risks and environmental impacts of boating across all waters of Canada.

Search and Rescue operations

Search and Rescue operations in Canada are jointly co-ordinated by the Canadian Forces and the Canadian Coast Guard. Together, they maintain 24-hour Rescue Coordination Centres (RCCs) at Halifax, Trenton and Victoria. The Canadian Coast

Did you know that recreational boats are involved in more than 50% of federal search and rescue incidents each year? That translates to more than 3,500 incidents annually.

Guard also operates 24-hour Maritime Rescue Sub-Centres (MRSCs) at St. John's and Quebec **(see page i for emergency numbers)**.

Experienced and well-trained women and men aboard Coast Guard fast rescue craft, cutters, hovercraft, and ships respond to vessels in need of assistance on the east and west coasts, Great Lakes, and the St. Lawrence River.

The Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary

The Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary is a national, non-profit volunteer organization that assists the Coast Guard to prevent loss of life and injury on the water. Many members of the Auxiliary are commercial fishers and recreational boaters. Once they have been trained, Auxiliarists volunteer their time and use their own vessels to help rescue those in distress and assist in safety awareness activities. Auxiliary Units can be recognized by a special pennant displayed on their vessels.

Marine Communications and Traffic Services

Marine Communications and Traffic Services (or MCTS) provides a Maritime Mobile Safety service. The centres continuously monitor the international distress and calling frequencies to detect distress situations and communications needs. They are the main communications link between vessels requiring assistance and shore Search and Rescue authorities. The Safety service also includes scheduled and continuously broadcasted *Notices to Shipping*, weather, and ice reports on marine frequencies listed in the Coast Guard annual publication, *Radio Aids to Marine Navigation*. **See *For Further Information* on how to obtain this publication.**

Marine Navigation Service

Marine Navigation Services keep waters safe and accessible by providing navigational aids, protecting the public's right to navigate on Canadian waters, and advising those who wish to set up private aids to navigation. This program benefits all users — pleasure craft, fishing and commercial vessels — and ensures the public's right to navigate.

Safe Boaters

Your legal responsibilities

Responsibilities As a boater, you are responsible for equipping yourself, for operating your boat safely, and for ensuring the safety of those on board. Operators and/or owners of pleasure craft that do not comply with Canadian laws and regulations could be subject to penalties or fines.

As a boater, you're expected to know the rules that apply on Canada's waterways. The regulations apply to those boating on any Canadian waterways. Operators and/or owners of pleasure craft that contravene provisions set out in the following *Acts, Regulations* and *Code* could be subject to penalties or fines.

The ***Small Vessel Regulations*** outline the minimum mandatory safety equipment required to be carried on a boat, safety precautions to follow before and while boating, and construction standards for building a recreational boat. All required safety equipment on board must be in good working order to satisfy the regulations. **See the *Safe Boats* section for more detail.**

As the owner or person entrusted by the owner, you are in violation of the regulations if you operate any craft that does not have all the required equipment on board, or in good working order. The same applies if you loan it.

If you are operating a boat that is licensed, registered, or titled in a country outside Canada, you must comply with safety equipment requirements of the country in which the boat is registered or licenced. Foreign visitors operating a Canadian licensed or registered vessel must comply with Canadian regulations.

The ***Collision Regulations***, in addition to other provisions, require every operator of a vessel to proceed at a safe speed, maintain a constant lookout, and to use

The offence, "**careless operation of a vessel**," has been added to the *Small Vessel Regulations*. An operator who is doing any of the following could be charged:

- travelling in a way that could adversely affect the safety of people or property considering the weather, boat traffic, hazards or potential hazards, or the number of people around the boat;
- operating a vessel in a careless manner, without consideration for other people or for the factors listed immediately above.

every available means, including radar and radio, if applicable, to determine whether there is a risk of a collision. These Regulations also specify right-of-way. **See *Safe Waterways* section for more information.**

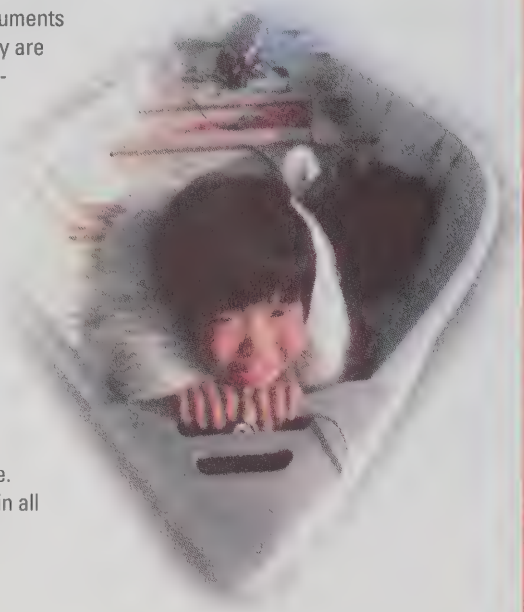
The ***Canada Shipping Act*** establishes a framework of rules and regulations and incorporates international conventions that shape the behaviour of mariners and boaters alike. One such provision calls for every pleasure craft operator to render assistance, insofar as the operator can do so without serious danger to their own craft or persons on board, to every person on the water who is in danger. **See *Safe Waterways* section for more information.**

Certain behaviours are offences under the ***Criminal Code of Canada*** such as operating a vessel dangerously, operating a vessel when impaired, towing waterskiers improperly, failing to stop at the scene of an accident, and operating an unseaworthy vessel.

The ***Boating Restriction Regulations*** impose speed limits (both posted and unposted), shoreline speed zones, horsepower limits and other operating restrictions on specified waterways.

The ***Charts and Nautical Publications Regulations*** requires all operators of ships and boats to have on board the latest edition of the largest scale chart, documents and publications for each area they are navigating and to keep these documents up-to-date. Vessels under 100 tons are exempt under certain conditions. **See *For Further Information* on how to obtain relevant charts and publications.**

Various other ***Regulations*** prohibit the operators of all vessels from dumping pollutants into Canadian waters. Pollutants prohibited in all Canadian waters include oil and oil-wastes, most hazardous chemicals, and garbage. Discharging sewage is prohibited in all waters of Ontario and in certain areas in British Columbia and Manitoba — to find out these specific "no-dump" sites, contact your local Office of Boating Safety or the toll-free *Boating Safety Infoline* at 1-800-267-6687. **See *Safe Waterways* section for more information.**



The ***Competency of Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations*** require operators of pleasure craft fitted with a motor and used for recreational purposes to have proof of competency on board at all times. These requirements are being phased in over ten years (see table).

Operator competency requirements*

How this applies to operators** of pleasure craft fitted with a motor and used for recreational purposes	Date at which proof of competency required on board
All operators born after April 1, 1983	**September 15, 1999**
All operators of craft under 4 m in length, including personal watercraft	**September 15, 2002**
All operators	**September 15, 2009**

* These requirements apply in areas outside the Northwest and Nunavut Territories at this time.

** Applies to non-residents operating their pleasure craft in Canadian waters after 45 consecutive days. Operator card or equivalent issued to a non-resident by their state or country will be considered as proof of competency.

TIP: *Certificates for boating safety courses completed before April 1, 1999 will be recognized.*

If you've already taken a course prior to these regulations — and have proof — then that course certificate or card will be accepted as proof of competency! If you have a certificate, but want to obtain a more convenient form of on-the-water proof, the Canadian Coast Guard is working on ways to accommodate this. Check the Canadian Coast Guard web site at www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca or call the *Boating Safety Infoline* at 1-800-267-6687 for news.

Proof of competency can take 1 of 3 forms:

1) ***proof*** of having taken a boating safety course prior to ***April 1, 1999***.
2) a pleasure craft operator card from a Canadian Coast Guard accredited course provider following a test;
3) a completed rental-boat safety checklist (for power-driven rental boats).

The operator card is good-for-life. Boaters can obtain their card after receiving a mark of at least 75% on a Canadian Coast Guard accredited test after having completed an accredited course. Boaters also have the option of taking this test without first completing a course. Professional mariners will see their qualification recognized.

For a list of accredited course providers in your area, visit the Canadian Coast Guard web site at **www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca** or call the *Boating Safety Infoline* at 1-800-267-6687.

Age-horsepower restrictions come into effect on April 1, 1999. These restrictions prohibit operators under the age of 16 years from operating craft above specified horsepower limits. This applies to the operation of pleasure craft fitted with a motor and used for recreational purposes. If an operator is accompanied and directly supervised in the pleasure craft by a person 16 years and older, the age-horsepower restrictions do not apply. These restrictions also prohibit persons under 16 years from operating personal watercraft regardless of whether they are accompanied by an adult.

The following table summarizes how these restrictions apply.

Age-horsepower restrictions*

How this applies to operators of pleasure craft fitted with a motor and used for recreational purposes	Power restrictions as of April 1, 1999
Under 12 years of age, and not directly supervised**	Can operate a vessel with no more than 10 hp (7.5 KW)
Between 12 years and under 16 years of age, and not directly supervised**	Can operate a vessel with no more than 40 hp (30 KW)
Under 16 years of age	Not allowed to operate a PWC***
16 years of age and over	No power restrictions

* These requirements apply in areas outside the Northwest and Nunavut Territories at this time.
** Directly supervised means: accompanied and directly supervised in the boat by a person 16 years of age or older.
*** Personal Watercraft

Boating and alcohol

We all know that driving a car while impaired is illegal. Operating a vessel anywhere in Canada while impaired is also an offence under the *Criminal Code*. Convictions, even for a first offence, can result in heavy penalties: a fine ranging from $300 to $2,000; a three-month to three-year prohibition from using a boat; and/or a jail sentence of up to six months. Provinces and territories have their own rules that determine when alcohol can be consumed or how it can be transported aboard a boat.

Besides the legal consequences, mixing alcohol and boating is far more dangerous than most people realize. Fatigue, sun, wind and the motion of the boat dull the senses. Alcohol intensifies these effects, leaving you with reduced reaction time, poorer fine motor skills, and impaired judgement.

Enforcement of the Law

The new ***Contraventions Act*** is changing how boating regulations are enforced. Previously, offences had to be processed through the courts in the same way as offences under the ***Criminal Code***. Law enforcement agencies felt the process was cumbersome and overly time-consuming for certain regulatory offences.

We know that at least 40% of all power-boating fatality victims had a blood alcohol level above the legal driving limit. Don't "cruise with booze." It's your responsibility!

Most on-water enforcement agencies have a zero tolerance when it comes to each person on board not having a Canadian approved personal flotation device or lifejacket that is an appropriate fit and is in good condition. In participating provinces, this contravention could cost you over $200 for each violation.

Under the new Act, enforcement authorities can ticket offenders on the spot instead of requiring them to appear in court. Tickets can be issued for offences such as not having the required safety equipment on board, disobeying speed limits, or careless operation.

At the time of publishing, the following provinces were using this system: New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Ontario and Manitoba. Nova Scotia and Quebec are expected to adopt the system in the summer of 1999. Discussions are ongoing with the remaining provinces and territories to do the same.

Your personal safety

Choosing the smart risk

Manage your own safety. Going on an extended canoe trip? Coastal sailing away from major traffic routes? Go prepared. Sure, anything can happen at any time but make the extra effort and consider your circumstances…

Think about some of the risks you've taken in your life. Everyone has taken some risks — who hasn't? Many people have taken some really stupid risks without even thinking about it.

We'd like to introduce you to The Stupid Line. It's the line of choice we each have that separates smart risk from stupid risk.

What's stupid risk?

Not looking over your shoulder before turning your boat. Not having paddles, flares and enough PFDs on board your boat. Drinking alcohol in your boat. Driving too close to swimmers or other boats. Navigating your boat on the wrong side of the buoy. Think about The Stupid Line the next time you're about to take a risk on the water and consider how you can turn a stupid risk into a smart one.

But how do you take a smart risk? There are five simple things that you can do.

Buckle Up
Drive Sober
Look First
Wear the Gear
Get Trained

Look at them for a moment, and think about what they mean.

We can't tell you what to do. And we can't tell you what to think. We all have to do that for ourselves. But we can tell you what to consider the next time you are on the water.

Buckle Up is simple. Did you know that if you are involved in a serious boating incident you are 5½ times less likely to drown if you are wearing your PFD or lifejacket?

Skydivers buckle up their parachute harnesses. Rock climbers and mountaineers buckle up their safety harnesses. Boaters buckle up their lifejacket.

Drive Sober is everyone's choice. Because of the fatiguing effects of the sun, wind, and the motion of the boat, one drink on board is like three on shore. It means, if you are drinking at all, then don't get behind the wheel. Don't get in a car or a boat. Don't drive. Period.

Look First means looking before you act. In Canada there are thousands of boating incidents each year because drivers weren't paying attention. If you're lucky, all you'll wind up with is an expensive repair. By taking a second to **Look First**, you could be saving more than a repair bill.

Wear the Gear is pretty simple, and people who take their sport seriously know to wear the gear. PFDs are gear, good sunglasses and appropriate clothing are gear. Paddles, whistles and flares are gear. Think of Canadian Coast Guard crews who perform daring rescues in heavy seas. They're fully equipped professionals. Anybody can get into a dangerous situation in a boat, but it takes having the right gear and using it properly to survive.

And finally, **Get Trained**. You wouldn't take ballet lessons to learn how to skydive. But people assume operating a boat is the same as driving a car. Before you go boating, there is a minimum you need to know — take an ***accredited boating safety*** course.

Buckle Up, **Drive Sober**, **Look First**, **Wear the Gear** and **Get Trained** are strategies for smart risk taking. Think about it. It's your choice.

– Adapted from *Smartrisk*, a partner in boating safety

Wearing your personal flotation device (PFD) and hypothermia

Approximately 90 percent of all persons who drown in recreational boating incidents were not wearing a flotation device.

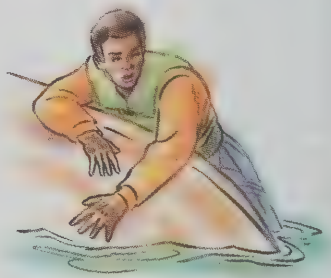
A personal flotation device (PFD) is the best insurance you can have. Wear it.

Boaters, in Canada's typically cold waters, should be aware of the risk of hypothermia from prolonged exposure to cold weather, particularly in water-soaked clothing, or from direct immersion. Hypothermia is a drop in body temperature below the normal level. At this lower temperature a person's muscle and mental functions are affected. A person exposed to cold water, and becoming hypothermic, can exhibit certain progressive signs and symptoms:

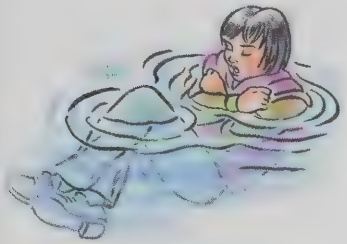
1. shivering and slurred speech, conscious but withdrawn at the early stage;
2. slow and weak pulse, slow respiration, lacks coordination, irrational, confused and sleepy at intermediate stage; and finally
3. weak, irregular or absent pulse or respiration, loss of consciousness at final stage.

If you do end up in the water, it is important to do everything you can to conserve energy and body heat. You may extend your survival time if you:

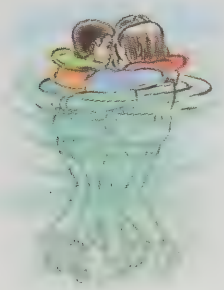
1. Wear your PFD or lifejacket. Valuable energy will be lost keeping your head above water if you are not wearing it.
2. Climb onto a nearby floating object to get as much of the body out of or above the water, if possible.



3. Adopt a "heat escape lessening position" (H.E.L.P.) by crossing arms tightly against the chest and by drawing the knees up close to the chest, if alone.



4. "Huddle" with other persons by getting the sides of everyone's chest close together with arms around mid to lower back and legs intertwined.



Boaters can protect themselves by wearing their PFD or lifejacket with multiple light layers of dry clothing and a water- or wind-proof outer layer. Other pieces of equipment that may provide additional protection from hypothermia include:

1. a floater suit — a full *nose-to-toes* PFD
2. an anti-exposure worksuit — a PFD with a thermal protection rating
3. a dry suit — to be used in conjunction with a flotation device and a thermal liner
4. a wet suit — traps and heats water against your body
5. an immersion suit — to be used in extreme conditions upon abandoning vessel (usually for off-shore use)

Before setting out

Making and filing sail plans

SAIL PLANS are also referred to as **TRIP** or **FLOAT** plans. No matter what you call them, all small craft operators, even for day trips, are encouraged to file one with a responsible person before heading out. If this is not possible, it can be filed with any Canadian Coast Guard Marine Communications and Traffic Services Centre by telephone, radio or in person.

What is a sail plan? A sail plan is a voyage itinerary which includes travel route and basic details of the vessel.

If you are taking a long trip, it is recommended that you file a daily position report (especially if your planned route has changed). **BE SURE TO DEACTIVATE THE SAIL PLAN** you have filed by reporting that you have returned or completed your trip to avoid launching an unwarranted search for you. To encourage you to follow these practices, we have included a form in the front of this guide that you can photocopy and use.

Assuming you have left it with a responsible individual, the person holding your sail plan should be instructed to contact the Rescue Coordination Centre if you are overdue. *(The telephone number can be found at the front of most telephone books and the first page of this Guide.)*

Inspecting your vessel

Why bother? Better a few minutes of delay onshore or at the dock than hours of delay in an uncomfortable or dangerous situation. Knowingly operating a pleasure craft that is unseaworthy is a criminal offence. This means the vessel, engine and equipment must be in working order.

The number of boaters stranded each year is significant. More than 50% of the calls for assistance received by federal Rescue Coordination Centres were from boaters who were in trouble as a result of the mechanical failure of their boats. One especially common cause of breakdown is simply running out of fuel.

Courtesy Small Vessel Examinations

Courtesy examinations are offered free-of-charge by the Canadian Coast Guard or in some areas of Canada, the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary or other boating and water safety organizations. With permission, an examiner will board your vessel and review with you the safety equipment required by law. The examiner will also inspect the other equipment you have and identify any deficiencies.

Pre-departure Checklist

A boating trip should be fun, safe and hassle-free. No matter if you own, rent or are borrowing a boat, before heading out make sure your vessel is in good working order and properly equipped.

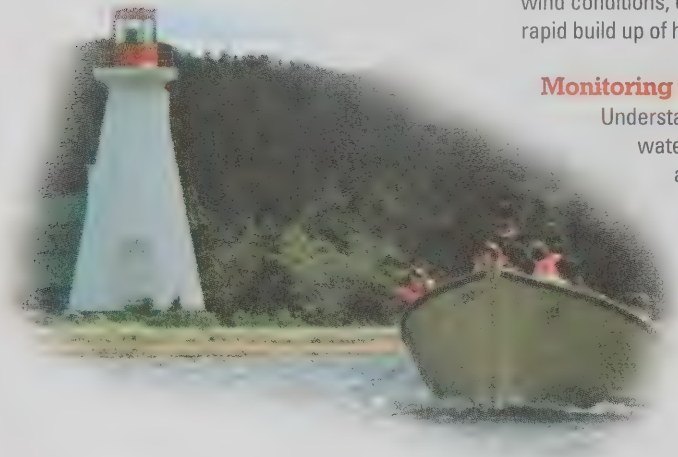
Start with an inspection of the hull: look for cracks or other damage. If your vessel is equipped with an engine, check that the throttle is operating smoothly and is not sticking or binding. Verify that the steering is operating properly. Check the oil and fuel levels — a good rule of thumb for fuel is: *one-third for the trip out, one-third for the return, and one-third as reserve*. Are all hoses, clamps and belts secure and in good shape? Check the battery's charge and its fluid levels.

Avoid inconvenience and potential danger by taking a few minutes with this checklist:

- ☑ What is the weather forecast?
- ☑ Any local hazards or boating restrictions?
- ☑ Do you have maps or charts?
- ☑ Are there enough personal flotation devices of appropriate size for everyone on board?
- ☑ All safety equipment in good working order?
- ☑ Ample reserves of fuel for the trip or will you need to refuel?
- ☑ Is your VHF radio working properly?
- ☑ First aid kit, basic tools and spare parts?
- ☑ Have you let someone know where you're going, when to expect you back and what your boat looks like?

Avoiding specific hazards

Being prepared goes beyond having your boat and equipment in tip-top shape. Check your marine charts to determine whether you will be encountering any overhead obstacles, bridges or underwater cables in the area where you will be boating. Reading marine charts with related publications such as Sailing Directions, and Tide Tables and Current Atlases will help you safely plan your trip by indicating water levels, times of low, slack and high tides, and the direction of flow.



Obviously, you must keep away from designated swimming areas when boating. Even canoes and kayaks can easily injure swimmers. Be on the lookout for people in the water any time you come close to shore (they may be snorkelling or engaging in other activities that make them hard to see). The sun's glare also makes it difficult to see people in the water.

If you are boating in an area not covered by marine charts, check with knowledgeable local residents for the presence of low-head dams, rapids, white water, local wind conditions, currents, and areas of rapid build up of high wave conditions.

Monitoring the weather

Understanding weather and water conditions is a key aspect of boating safely. Boaters need to know how to obtain current, relevant information before they head out. They also need to know how to get updates while out on the water, which requires the knowledge and skill to use a marine radio. A receiver for continuous marine weather forecasts is also available, and it is distributed through marine supply outlets.

When you get to the water, make sure the conditions you see match those predicted. Once under way, remember to "keep your eye on the sky." If the sky looks dark and cloudy and conditions are changing rapidly, head for shore (check your charts in advance to know where to seek shelter). Summer thunderstorms can strike quickly and unexpectedly. Other good indications of approaching bad weather are falling barometric pressure, increasing winds and changes in wind direction, which generally lead to increased wave action. **See *For Further Information* on how to obtain marine weather forecasts.**

Environment Canada's *Atmospheric Environment Program* uses some specialized terminology in marine weather forecasts:

Light winds are winds less than 15 knots.

Moderate winds are winds in the range of 16–19 knots.

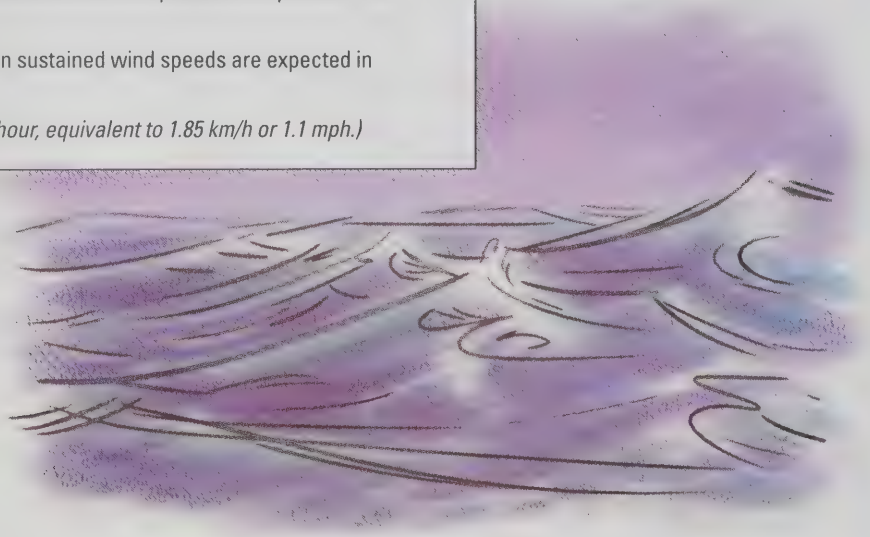
Strong winds are sustained wind speeds in the range of 20–33 knots.

Small craft warnings are issued when sustained wind speeds are expected in the range of 20–33 knots.

Gale warnings are issued when sustained wind speeds are expected in the range of 34–47 knots.

Storm warnings are issued when sustained wind speeds are expected in the range of 48–63 knots.

(A knot is one nautical mile per hour, equivalent to 1.85 km/h or 1.1 mph.)



Responsible operation of your boat

Sharing our waterways

There are many different types of boats and uses of Canada's waterways. As a boat operator, you should respect others on or near the water, as they should respect your rights. Boaters exercising courtesy and common sense will not create a hazard, threat, stress or an irritant to themselves, to others, to the environment, or to wildlife.

Operating your personal watercraft

Personal watercraft (PWCs) are one of the fastest growing segments of recreational boating in North America. **As high performance vessels, skill and experience are required to operate them safely. As of April 1, 1999, operators of PWCs must be 16 years of age or older. By September 15, 2002, all operators will need to have proof of competency on board.** Before you lend your PWC you are responsible to ensure the operator is fully aware of the issues of safe operation. Please consider these basic tips before getting underway.

- Wear a Canadian-approved personal flotation device (PFD) at all times. A highly visible PFD will improve your chances of being seen by other boaters. If the water is cold, wear some thermal protection. Remember: Inflatable PFDs are not permitted.
- Read the owner's manual before setting out. PWCs have some unique handling characteristics which are quite different from more conventional boats — *remember you need power to steer the boat.*
- Attach engine stop line securely to your wrist or PFD.
- Respect the speed limits and other boating restrictions.
- Be cautious and courteous. Many communities consider the noise from PWCs to be annoying if operated persistently in one place. Respect your neighbours.
- Be aware of the impact your PWC can have on the environment. Avoid high-speed operation near shorelines.
- Navigate with care. At high speed it is very difficult to see swimmers, water skiers, divers and other PWC operators, so make sure you give them lots of room. Avoid wake jumping and passing close to other boats.
- Don't ride after dark or in reduced visibility.
- Make sure your PWC is properly licensed and marked.
- Gasoline vapours may cause fire or explosions. Do not start the PWC if gasoline or vapours are present in the engine compartment. Always replace the engine cover or seat before starting.

Loading your boat

Overloading is dangerous. The number of persons that can be carried safely depends on the type of boat, distribution of occupants and the equipment carried. As the operator, you must follow the limits identified on the capacity plate (if appropriate) as the "recommended gross load capacity" or the "equivalent number of adult persons". When following these limits, recognize the maximum load is calculated for fair weather operating conditions and position persons and the gear so as to distribute the weight evenly. If possible keep the load as low as possible on board and / or secure the gear to prevent it from shifting and affecting stability.

Using Nautical Charts

Because there are no roadways in water travel, it seems even simpler than automobile travel. We just point and go, don't we?

In fact, it's the absence of defined pathways for travelling on water or signage to clearly tell us where we are that makes navigation difficult. To navigate safely, a boater needs to know and understand many things: the use of a compass and marine charts; how to plot a course; positioning methods; the use of electronic navigational equipment; navigational references such as tide tables; the Canadian buoyage system; navigation lights and signals; Notices to Mariners and Sailing Directions. ***Take an accredited boating safety course and find out more...***

The Canadian Coast Guard publishes monthly *Notices to Mariners*, which contain important information and amendments to marine charts and publications. These notices can be obtained free-of-charge from **www.notmar.com**. **See *For Further Information* for more details on obtaining publications.**

Obtain as much information as possible on the area where you plan to boat. For many small vessels, such as canoes and sailboards, rapids, currents and commercial shipping channels are especially dangerous.

What to do in an emergency

Calling for help

If an emergency does occur, knowing how to communicate distress messages and request assistance can make the difference between life and death. Trying to keep your boat from swamping or recovering someone who has fallen overboard is no time to learn. You may only get one chance to call for help.

***TIP:** Canadian Coast Guard reminds every boater to consider what they would do in the event of a break-down, grounding, hull leak or sinking. Sign up for an accredited boating safety course and learn the proper actions to take in an emergency.*

Marine (VHF) Radios

VHF radio is the recommended means of issuing a distress message. If you have a marine VHF radio, keep it tuned to channel 16. In 1998, the Canadian Coast Guard began installing VHF with digital selective calling channel 70 facilities at selected sites. Know where you are at all times and be prepared to describe your location accurately.

In case of **grave and imminent danger** *(for example, your boat is taking on water and you are in danger of sinking or capsizing)* use **channel 16** and repeat **"MAYDAY"** three times. Then give the name of your vessel and its position, the nature of your problem and the type of assistance needed.

If you **need assistance but are not in immediate danger** *(for example, your motor has quit and you are unable to get back to shore)* use **channel 16** and repeat **"PAN PAN"** three times. Then give the name of your vessel and its position, the nature of your problem and the type of assistance needed.

GMDSS

The Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) is a new international system that uses improved land-based and satellite technology in conjunction with shipboard radio systems. It can be used to quickly alert search and rescue authorities in an emergency, and its emergency signal can also be picked up by vessels in the immediate vicinity.

Recreational vessels will not be required to carry GMDSS equipment, but it will be recommended. Vessels equipped with Global Positioning System (GPS) or LORAN-C equipment are encouraged to connect this equipment to Digital Selective Calling (DSC) and/or satellite communications equipment. DSC is a feature that can be added to traditional marine radios to maintain an automatic watch on distress and calling channels.

Remember: Channel 16 is used for EMERGENCY and CALLING purposes only. Once you have called another vessel on channel 16, take your conversation to a working frequency and continue. Anyone who uses a VHF radio must follow the procedures described in the *VHF Radiotelephone Practices and Procedures Regulations*.

Currently, all VHF radio operators are required to have a restricted operator's certificate (ROC) with maritime qualifications. Contact your local *Industry Canada* office for more information on procedures and licence requirements.

Cellular phones

With a cellular phone, you can contact Rescue Coordination Centres directly or by dialling ***16** for the Canadian Coast Guard Marine Communications and Traffic Services Centres. Remember that **a cellular phone is not a good substitute for a marine radio** if you get into trouble and it is not an approved means of issuing a distress call. Making a call this way does not alert other boats close to you that you are in distress — those other boats could be the ones to help you first if they could hear you. Unlike VHF transmissions, cellular phone signals cannot be followed back to your location by rescuers.

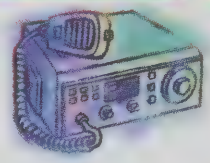
Distress Signals

If you see a distress signal, you are required by law to determine whether you can assist those in distress without endangering your own life or safety of your vessel. Where possible, you must also contact the nearest Rescue Coordination Centre to inform them of the type and location of the distress signal you have seen.

Knowing the following distress signals will help you call for help in an emergency and recognize those in trouble.

Not only is it against the law to make a false distress signal, but false alarms commit search and rescue personnel making them potentially unavailable or further away from real emergencies.

MARINE RADIO



DISTRESS CALL

Use: 2182 kHz (MF) or channel 16, 156.8 MHz (VHF) DSC alert, channel 70 (only for DSC type radios and where the service is offered)

CALLING PROCEDURES

Mayday Mayday Mayday	Immediate danger for persons OR ship
Pan-Pan Pan-Pan Pan-Pan	Urgent message concerning safety of a person or ship

- Give vessel name and call sign
- State position of vessel
- Describe nature of emergency

EMERGENCY POSITION INDICATING RADIOBEACON (EPIRB)

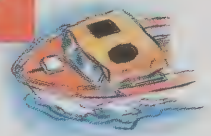
- USE ALARM SIGNAL

CODE FLAGS

N over C

BALL over or under SQUARE

DISTRESS CLOTH



ARM SIGNAL

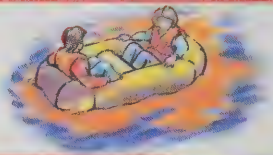
Do not use this signal near helicopters

SOUND SIGNALS

(different meaning).

FLARES

DYE MARKER



FLASHLIGHT

Recover a person overboard

In certain weather conditions and on some vessels, boaters are wise to wear a safety harness with a safety line secured to the vessel. This would prevent anyone from falling overboard unless, of course, the vessel capsizes. Know and practise the following procedures with your crew before you need to use these skills for real.

If someone does fall overboard, sound the alarm immediately and then:

- slow down, stop if possible, and throw something buoyant to assist the person (this will also mark the spot if the person submerges);
- assign one person to keep sight of the overboard person and have him or her continuously point to the victim's location;
- carefully manoeuvre to recover the overboard person.

Establish contact with the person in the water using a buoyant heaving line or lifebuoy secured to the boat with a line, and recover the person over the windward side. A heavy rope, chain or cable secured at both ends and draped over the side, almost touching the water, can provide a makeshift step if necessary.

Sailors and power boaters should become familiar with various techniques for recovering a person overboard — consider how effectively the manoeuvre can be performed, considering sea-state, additional crew duties and condition of the person overboard. ***The Canadian Coast Guard strongly recommends sailors, power boaters and paddlers learn a recovery technique that works, and PRACTISE.***

Have you considered how you get someone into the boat if they could not assist in their own recovery? Can you lift them in if you were alone? Can they lift you? In cases where a person's size or where the freeboard of the boat makes retrieval by hand difficult, Canadian Coast Guard recommends that boaters consider appropriate lifting slings and necessary rigging if it isn't already mandatory for your size of boat.

Safe Boats

Equipment requirements for pleasure craft (effective April 1, 1999)

What has changed

Changes were developed in response to the emergence of new water activities, innovations in lifesaving equipment and the technological evolution of watercraft. New equipment requirements, starting April 1, 1999, allow for greater flexibility in selecting appropriate safety equipment. In some cases boaters are offered a choice of safety equipment. Note that life saving cushions will no longer be approved as personal flotation equipment.

Who needs to comply? — Types of recreational vessels and activities

Some people are surprised to discover that safe boating regulations apply to all recreational vessels. If you participate in any of the following activities, the regulations apply to you:

- operating any powerboat;
- operating a personal watercraft (PWC);
- canoeing, kayaking or participating in any other paddling sport;
- sailing or sailboarding;
- towing a waterskier, wake boarder, or parasailor;
- racing in an on-water official regatta or competition.

These minimum safety equipment requirements do not apply to beach and pool toys that measure less than 2 m in length that are not designed to be fitted with a motor. Note that operating an outboard motor-driven surfboard in any Canadian waters is strictly prohibited.

If you are renting a boat and will be operating it for recreational purposes, these carriage requirements also apply to you. If you are using your vessel for commercial purposes or are carrying passengers for remuneration you should consult Transport Canada to check which regulations apply.

Minimum required equipment

Safe, responsible operation is a key ingredient for enjoyable boating. The right safety equipment provides peace of mind and if something goes wrong, it may save a life. The *Small Vessel Regulations* describe the minimum safety equipment requirements for all recreational vessels. There may be additional items you will want to take depending on your vessel, type of activities and environment. Go prepared. Make sure your equipment is easily accessible and can be operated by everyone on board.

Remember, ensuring that all equipment is in good working order isn't just common sense, it's the law.

Year 2000 is arriving fast: Are you ready?

The Year 2000 Problem, or "Millennium Bug", can affect any equipment that uses computer chips, including modern marine equipment. Chips that have a Year 2000 Problem may cause unexpected equipment malfunctions sometime between now and 2000.

Tips

- contact your supplier to determine if your equipment has a Year 2000 problem (i.e. is it "Year 2000 Compliant");
- repair or replace non-compliant equipment;
- check the Office of Boating Safety web site at **www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca** for further information on CCG activities related to the Year 2000 Problem;
- spread the word on the Year 2000 Problem to ensure safe boating for everyone.

The *Small Vessel Regulations* set out the minimum safety equipment required on board a recreational boat according to VESSEL LENGTH. In some examples over the next 16 pages, the minimum safety equipment is displayed for VESSEL TYPE to assist the reader. **In the case of any discrepancy between the information in this Guide and the regulations, the regulatory text shall remain the final authority.** To determine the length of your vessel, refer to your manufacturer's product information or measure it yourself — from the forward end of the foremost outside surface of the hull shell to the after end of the aftermost outside surface of the hull shell.

Sailboard

Personal protection equipment

1. one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board

2. one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length

Boat safety equipment

3. one manual propelling device

Distress equipment

4. a watertight flashlight
   OR
   3 Canadian approved flares of Type A, B or C

This equipment (2, 3, 4) is not mandatory if all people on the sailboard are wearing a Canadian-approved flotation device of appropriate size or engaged in an official competition.

Navigation equipment

5. a sound signalling device or a sound signalling appliance

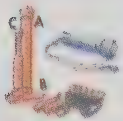
Paddleboats and Watercycles (under 6 M in length)

Personal protection equipment

1. one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board

2. one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length

Distress equipment



3. a watertight flashlight
   OR
   3 Canadian approved flares of Type A, B or C

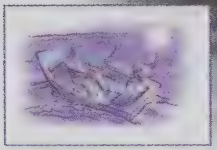
This equipment (2, 3) is not mandatory if all people on board are wearing a Canadian-approved flotation device of appropriate size.

Navigation equipment

4. a sound signalling device or a sound signalling appliance

5. navigation lights that meet the applicable standards set out in the *Collision Regulations* if the pleasure craft is operated after sunset and before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility

Canoes, Kayaks, Rowboats and Rowing Shells (no

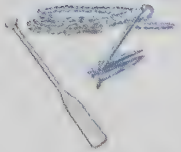


ver 6 M in length)

Personal protection equipment

1. one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board
2. one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length

Boat safety equipment



3. one manual propelling device

   OR

   an anchor with not less than 15 m of cable, rope or chain in any combination

4. one bailer or one manual water pump fitted with or accompanied by sufficient hose to enable a person using the pump to pump water from the bilge of the vessel over the side of the vessel

Navigation equipment

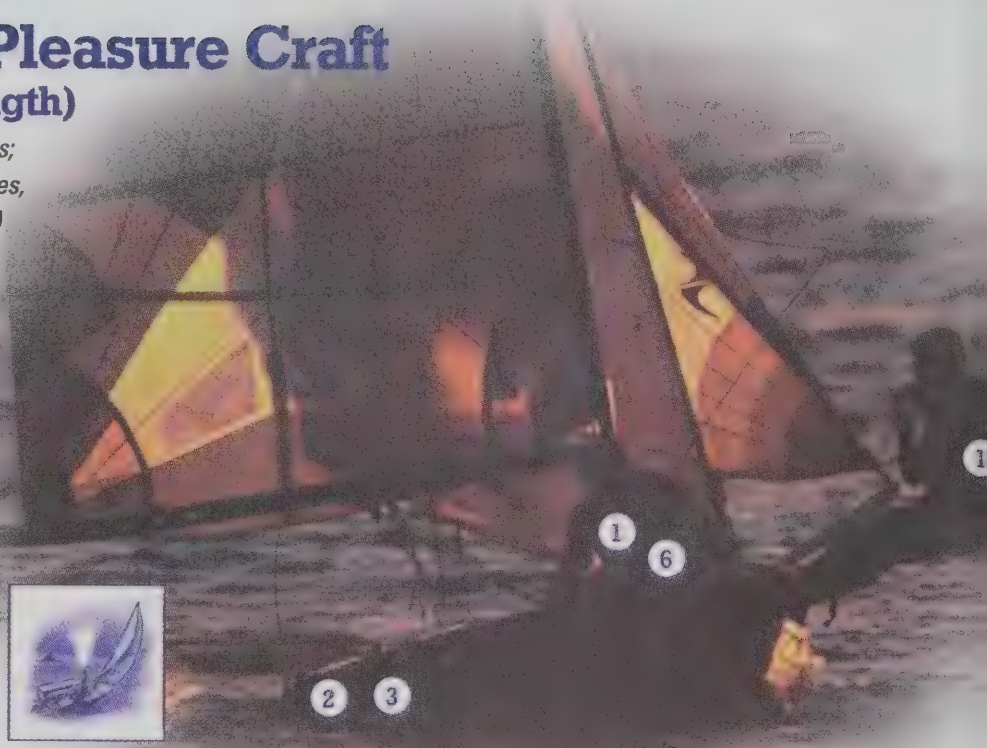
5. a sound signalling device or a sound signalling appliance

6. navigation lights that meet the applicable standards set out in the *Collision Regulations* if the pleasure craft is operated after sunset and before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility

Unpowered Pleasure Craft

(not over 6 M in length)

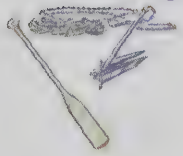
(see separate sections for sailboards; paddleboats and watercycles; canoes, kayaks, rowboats and rowing shells)



Personal protection equipment

1. one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board
2. one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length

Boat safety equipment



3. one manual propelling device
   OR
   an anchor with not less than 15 m of cable, rope or chain in any combination

4. one Class 5BC fire extinguisher, if the pleasure craft is equipped with a fuelburning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance

5. one bailer or one manual water pump fitted with or accompanied by sufficient hose to enable a person using the pump to pump water from the bilge of the vessel over the side of the vessel

A bailer or manual water pump is not required for any self-bailing sealed hull sailing vessel fitted with a recess-type cockpit that cannot contain a sufficient quantity of water to make the vessel capsize or a multi-hull vessel that has subdivided multiple-sealed hull construction

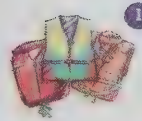
Navigation equipment

6. a sound signalling device or a sound signalling appliance

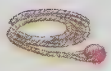
7. navigation lights that meet the applicable standards set out in the *Collision Regulations* if the pleasure craft is operated after sunset and before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility

Personal Watercraft

Personal protection equipment

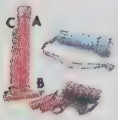


1. one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board



2. one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length

Distress equipment



3. a watertight flashlight
   OR
   3 Canadian approved flares of Type A, B or C

Navigation equipment

4. a sound signalling device or a sound signalling appliance

Boat safety equipment

5. one manual propelling device
   OR
   an anchor with not less than 15 m of cable, rope or chain in any combination

6. one bailer or one manual water pump fitted with or accompanied by sufficient hose to enable a person using the pump to pump water from the bilge of the vessel over the side of the vessel

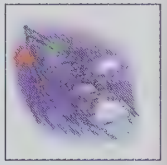
7. one Class 5BC fire extinguisher

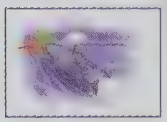
This equipment (5, 6, 7) is not mandatory if all people on the PWC are wearing a Canadian-approved personal flotation device of appropriate size.

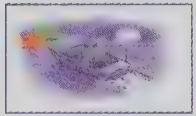
Powered Pleasure Craft

(not over 6 M in length)

(see separate section for personal watercraft)



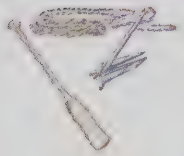




Personal protection equipment

1. one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board
2. one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length

Boat safety equipment



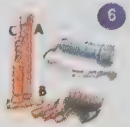
3. one manual propelling device
   OR
   an anchor with not less than 15 m of cable, rope or chain in any combination

4. one Class 5BC fire extinguisher, if the pleasure craft is equipped with an inboard engine, a fixed fuel tank of any size, or a fuel-burning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance

5. one bailer or one manual water pump fitted with or accompanied by sufficient hose to enable a person using the pump to pump water from the bilge of the vessel over the side of the vessel

A bailer or manual water pump is not required for any multi-hull vessel that has subdivided multiple-sealed hull construction.

Distress equipment



6. a watertight flashlight
   OR
   3 Canadian approved flares of Type A, B or C

Navigation equipment

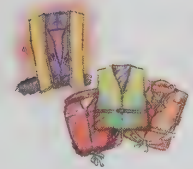
7. a sound signalling device or a sound signalling appliance

8. navigation lights that meet the applicable standards set out in the *Collision Regulations* if the pleasure craft is operated after sunset and before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility

Pleasure Craft (over 6 M in length but not over 8 M in length)

(including unpowered craft)

Sailing Vessel less than 7 m long when underway



Personal protection equipment

1. one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board

2. one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length
   OR
   one approved lifebuoy with an outside diameter of 610 mm or 762 mm that is attached to a buoyant line of not less than 15 m in length

3. a reboarding device if the freeboard of the vessel is greater than 0.5 m

Boat safety equipment

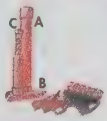
4. one manual propelling device
   OR
   an anchor with not less than 15 m of cable, rope or chain in any combination

5. one bailer or one manual water pump fitted with or accompanied by sufficient hose to enable a person using the pump to pump water from the bilge of the vessel over the side of the vessel

6. one Class 5BC fire extinguisher, if the pleasure craft is a powerdriven vessel, plus another class 5BC fire extinguisher if the pleasure craft is equipped with a fuelburning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance

Distress equipment

7. a watertight flashlight



8. 6* Canadian approved flares of Type A, B or C

** exempt from carrying pyrotechnic distress signals if:*

- operating in a river, canal or lake in which it can at no time be more than one mile from shore; **or**
- engaged in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition and has no sleeping arrangements.

Navigation equipment

9. a sound signalling device or a sound signalling appliance

10. navigation lights that meet the applicable standards set out in the *Collision Regulations* if the pleasure craft is operated after sunset and before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility

IN LENGTH

over 6 M – 8 M

but not over

Pleasure Craft (over 8 M in length but not over 12 M in length)

(including powered craft)

Personal protection equipment

1. one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board
2. one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length
3. one approved lifebuoy with an outside diameter of 610 mm or 762 mm that is attached to a buoyant line of not less than 15 m in length
4. a reboarding device if the freeboard of the vessel is greater than 0.5 m

Boat safety equipment

5. an anchor with not less than 30 m of cable, rope or chain in any combination
6. one bailer
7. one manual water pump fitted with or accompanied by sufficient hose to enable a person using the pump to pump water from the bilge of the vessel over the side of the vessel

8. one Class 10BC fire extinguisher, if the pleasure craft is a powerdriven vessel, plus another class 10BC fire extinguisher if the pleasure craft is equipped with a fuelburning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance

Distress equipment

9. a watertight flashlight
10. 12* Canadian approved flares of Type A, B, C or D, not more than 6 of which are of Type D

exempt from carrying pyrotechnic distress signals if:

- operating in a river, canal or lake in which it can at no time be more than one mile from shore; **or**
- engaged in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition and has no sleeping arrangements.

Navigation equipment

11. a sound signalling device or a sound signalling appliance
12. navigation lights that meet the applicable standards set out in the *Collision Regulations*

IN LENGTH

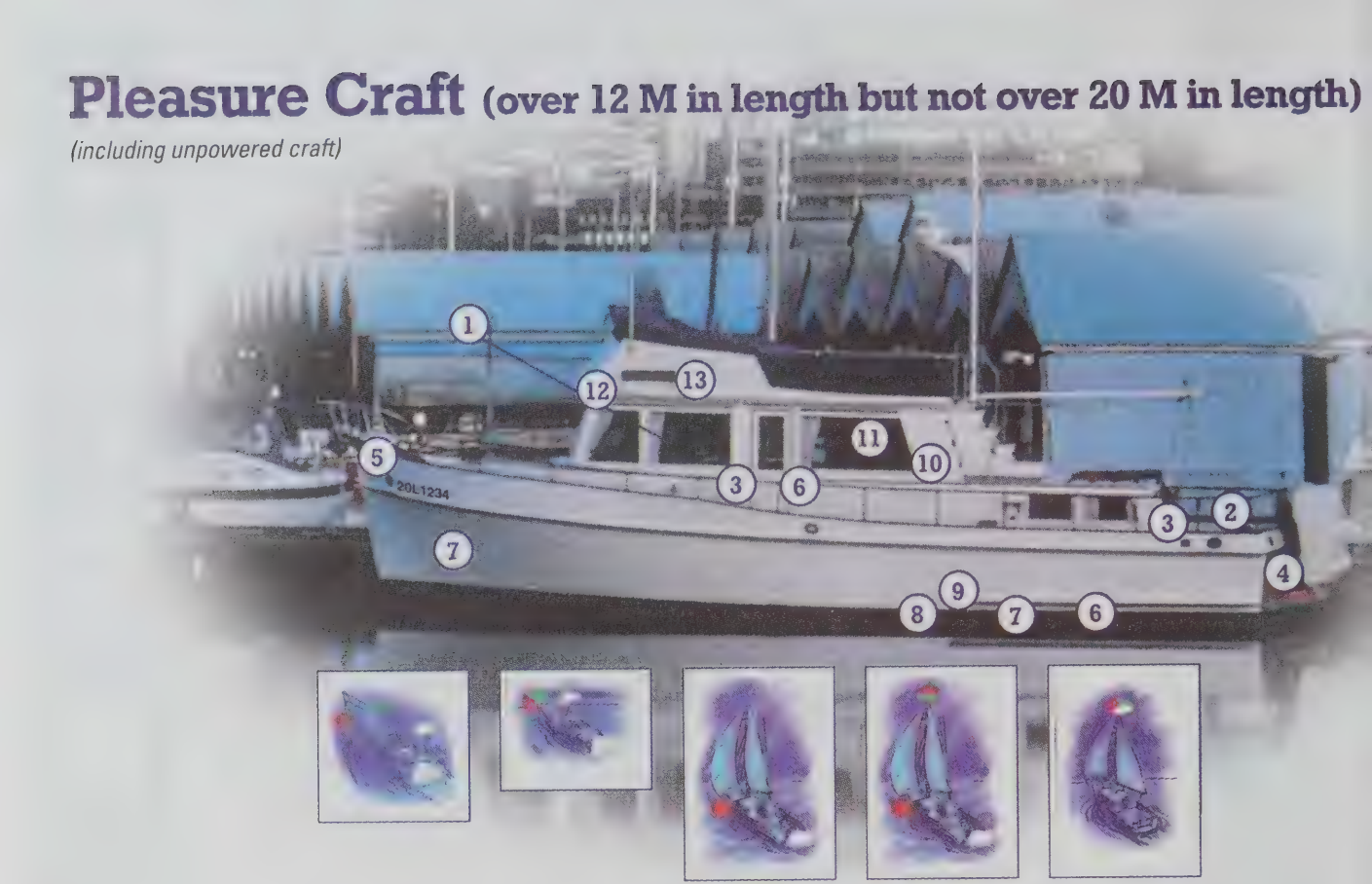
8 M – 12 M

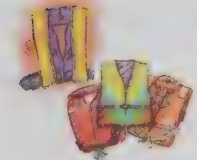
OVER

but not over

Pleasure Craft (over 12 M in length but not over 20 M in length)

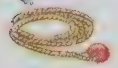
(including unpowered craft)



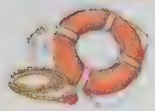


Personal protection equipment

1. one Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board



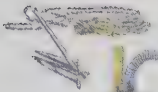
2. one buoyant heaving line of not less than 15 m in length



3. one approved lifebuoy with an outside diameter of 610 mm or 762 mm that is equipped with a self-igniting light and is attached to a buoyant line of not less than 15 m in length

4. a reboarding device

Boat safety equipment



5. an anchor with not less than 50 m of cable, rope or chain in any combination

6. bilge pumping arrangements

7. one Class 10BC fire extinguisher at each of the following locations:
   - at each access to any space where a fuelburning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance is fitted
   - at the entrance to any accommodation space
   - at the entrance to the engine room space

8. 1 axe

9. 2 buckets, each with a capacity of 10 L or more

Distress equipment

10. a watertight flashlight

11. 12 Canadian approved flares of Type A, B, C or D, not more than 6 of which are of Type D

Navigation equipment

12. 2 sound signalling appliances (bell and whistle)

13. navigation lights that meet the applicable standards set out in the *Collision Regulations*

IN LENGTH

over 12 M – but not over 20 M

Specific requirements for boats involved in competition

As of April 1, 1999, any type of racing pleasure craft and its crew may carry alternative safety equipment when they

are engaged in ***formal training***, in an ***official competition*** or in ***final preparation*** for an official competition. Read on to see if your event or training sessions qualify for this exemption:

Official competition means a competition or regatta organized by a governing body or by a club or an organization that is affiliated with a ***governing body***.

Formal training means practice for an official competition under the supervision of a coach or official certified by a ***governing body***.

Final preparation for an official competition, means activities to prepare for the competition that take place at the competition venue and during the times specified by the organizer of the competition.

Governing body means a national water sport governing body that publishes written rules and criteria respecting conduct and safety requirements during skill demonstrations, formal training or official competitions and that:

- certifies coaches and coaching programs,
- certifies officials and programs for officials, or
- recommends training and safety guidelines for certified coaches or officials.

Safety craft means a boat, aircraft or other means of transport with a crew on board that is used for surveillance and lifeguarding activities during formal training or official competitions.

Alternative equipment for racing canoes, racing kayaks and rowing shells

A racing canoe or racing kayak is not required to carry the equipment referred to in any part of this guide if it and its crew are engaged in formal training, in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition and

- it is attended by a ***safety craft*** carrying a personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each member of the crew of the largest vessel being attended (in addition to its own safety equipment); **OR**
- it carries
  - a personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each member of the crew involved in the competition,
  - a soundsignalling device, and
  - if it is operated after sunset and before sunrise, a watertight flashlight.

A rowing shell is not required to carry the equipment referred to in any part of this guide, if,

(a) it is attended by a safety craft carrying a personal flotation device of appropriate size for each member of the crew of the largest vessel being attended; or,

(b) it carries a personal flotation device or lifejacket of appropriate size for each member of the crew, a soundsignalling device, and, if it is operated after sunset and before sunrise, a watertight flashlight; or,

(c) it is competing or training during a provincially, nationally or internationally sanctioned regatta or competition.

Alternative equipment for racing-type pleasure craft

Any racing-type pleasure craft *(other than a racing canoe, kayaks or rowing shells mentioned above)* that is engaged in formal training, in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition and that is **operated under conditions of clear visibility and attended by a safety craft** may carry, instead of the mandatory equipment described on pages 26 to 43 of this section, the safety equipment that is required under the rules of the applicable governing body.

Personal protection equipment

Personal flotation devices (PFDs) and lifejackets

The law requires boats to be equipped with a **Canadian-approved** PFD or life-jacket of **an appropriate size** for each person on board (except for any infant who weighs less than 9 kg or any person whose chest size exceeds 140 cm).

TIP: ***It won't work if you don't wear it!***

The Coast Guard is working towards improving the usage and wearability of Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs). Now more than ever, a wider range of approved types and colours of PFD's are available to boaters. Manufacturers now have the flexibility to respond to consumers' demand for comfort and fashion. PFD's now come in a variety of colours and various inflatable configurations. When shopping keep in mind your need for visibility on or in the water. ***Open the PFD and look at the label — check for the Canadian Coast Guard, Department of Fisheries and Oceans or Department of Transport approval.***

Please note that, as of April 1 1999, lifesaving cushions are no longer accepted as approved PFDs

In order for an inflatable PFD to meet this requirement, it must be:

- worn while in an open boat, or
- worn while on deck or in the cockpit o be readily available to persons below deck of vessels with cabins.

Inflatable PFDs are **NOT** approved for use by persons less than 16 years of age or weighing less than 36.3 kg.

Inflatable PFDs are **NOT** approved for use on PWCs and inflatable PFDs fitted with an automatic inflator are not permitted for sailboarding (automatic inflator

causes the PFD to inflate the instant it is immersed in water. However, no products are approved at the time of publishing this Guide).

Pouch type PFDs are only permitted for rowing and paddling activities but NO inflatable is approved for use for white water activities.

Lifejackets come in only orange, red or yellow, offering greater buoyancy and the ability to turn an unconscious person face-up in the water.

Choose a flotation device that meets your specific needs. Wear it.

Proper care of your flotation device

Take good care of your lifejacket or PFD. Flotation devices that are ripped or in poor condition are not considered approved. Flotation gear should not be used for kneeling, sitting or as a fender for your boat. Check it's buoyancy regularly by wading out until the water is waist deep; bend your knees and see how well you float.

You should allow your flotation gear to dry in the open air, not close to a direct heat source. It should be kept in a dry, well-ventilated, easily accessible place.

Clean with a mild soap and running water. Strong detergents or gasoline should never be used. Do not dry clean.

Parents take note

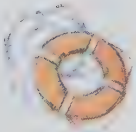
A lifejacket or PFD is no substitute for adult supervision.

Children should be encouraged to wear their lifejacket or PFD at all times. They should learn how to put them on in the water. Some lifejacket and PFDs are designed specially for children; select the one that best suits your child's size and weight. Because of the way their body weight is distributed, children do not float well in a face up position and tend to panic easily. Diapers, when wet, will adversely affect the performance of flotation devices. **Children under 16 years of age cannot wear inflatable PFDs.**

Buoyant Heaving Lines

Buoyant heaving lines are a new requirement as of April 1, 1999 for most boats. Check the size category for your vessel to determine the length required.

Lifebuoys



When buying a lifebuoy, look for the Transport Canada approval sticker. Store this piece of equipment so that it is readily accessible in the event someone goes overboard. **Note:** as of April 1, 1999, the 508 mm diameter lifebuoys are no longer acceptable.

Note: In Canada, horseshoes do not meet the requirement for having a lifebuoy.

Lifting harness and appropriate rigging

This is a new requirement as of April 1, 1999 for vessels over 20m. When purchasing a harness and rigging, consider how you would recover an injured or unconscious person using the device.

Reboarding device

This is a new requirement as of April 1, 1999. All boats over 12 m and boats 6–12m with freeboard exceeding 0.5m require a reboarding device. If your vessel is equipped with transom ladders or swim platform ladders it already meets this requirement.

TIP: Here's a tip — Specially designed "throw-bags" are available to the boater in lengths over 15m. Many recreational boats are used for towing waterskiers. A good quality waterskiing tow rope of at least 15m and made from buoyant material like polypropylene makes an excellent buoyant heaving line. The loop at the end and weighted floating handle make it easy to cleat and throw.

Boat safety equipment

Manual propelling device

New as of April 1, 1999, a "manual propelling device" means one of the following:

- a set of oars;
- a paddle;
- any other apparatus that can be used manually by a person to propel a vessel, including pumping the rudder on small open sailboats.

Bailers and manual water pumps

Bailers must be of at least 750mL with opening minimum 65 cm^2 and constructed of plastic or metal. If you choose to have a manual pump, the pump and hose must be able to reach the bilge and discharge over the side of the vessel.

A bailer or manual water pump is not required for any multi-hull vessel that has subdivided multiple-sealed hull construction or any sailboat fitted with a recess-type cockpit that cannot contain a sufficient quantity of water to capsize the vessel.

Fire extinguishers

To describe the types of fire extinguishers required by various sizes of vessels, the *Small Vessel Regulations* now use the same terminology you will find marked on extinguishers: Class A, B, C. Class A means the extinguisher is designed for fires of combustible, solid materials (wood, paper, etc.), B for combustible liquids (gas, oil, etc.) and C for electrical. The number before the letter rates the extinguisher's relative fire-fighting effectiveness, so that a 3A device will put out a larger fire than a 2A device. (Note that there are no numbers before the C on Class C extinguishers.) Although the regulations specify only class BC, look for an extinguisher with an additional class A rating when purchasing.

The type of fire extinguishers you choose must be approved by the:

- Board of Steamship Inspection (Transport Canada);
- Underwriters Laboratories of Canada;
- British Board of Trade for Marine Use; or
- United States Coast Guard (for marine use).

A marine type fire extinguisher is highly recommended because of its resistance to corrosion. Obviously, dead fire extinguishers are useless. Check them frequently for proper pressure and be sure that everyone on board knows how to operate them. With chemical type devices, take them out of their bracket and shake them vigorously in the upside down position (about once a month) to prevent the extinguishing agent from caking and hardening at the bottom.

With CO_2 types, weigh them annually and have them recharged if they contain less than 90% of their rated capacity. If you use the Halon 1211 types, have them inspected regularly. CO_2 and Halon extinguishers both discharge a colourless, odourless gas that displaces oxygen. Exercise caution when storing or using them in accommodation spaces.

The *Small Vessel Regulations* do not address the automatic extinguishing systems that some vessels may have. Even if your vessel has this type of system, you must carry the portable extinguishers indicated in the Minimum Required Equipment section of this Guide.

TIP: Making a bailer out of a 4 litre bleach bottle (useful for small open boats)

Step 1: *secure lid*

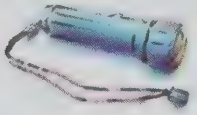
Step 2: *cut off bottom*

Step 3: *cut along side with handle*

Distress equipment

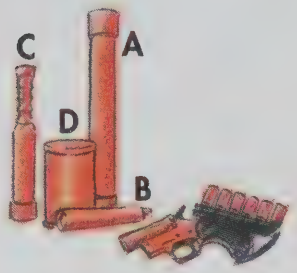
Watertight flashlight

New as of April 1, 1999 for almost every boat is the requirement for a watertight flashlight or flares. In the event of an electrical failure the watertight flashlight may be your only means of signalling for help.



Flares

There are four types of approved pyrotechnics (A, B, C, D). Flares should be stored in a cool, dry location and in a watertight container. Make sure flares are readily accessible in case of an emergency. **It is important to note that pyrotechnics are only valid for 4 years from the date of manufacture stamped on each flare.** To dispose of your outdated flares, seek advice from your nearest law enforcement agency, Canadian Coast Guard office or fire department.



Vessels over 6 m up to 12 m are exempt from carrying pyrotechnic distress signals if:

- operating in a river, canal or lake in which it can at no time be more than one mile from shore; **OR**
- engaged in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition and have no sleeping arrangements.

Examples of where flares *are* required:

- vessels operating in any ocean
- vessels operating in rivers that are navigable and empty into a body of water more than one mile from shore (examples: Fraser River, BC; Red River, MB; St. Mary's, St. Clair, Detroit, St. Lawrence Rivers, ON; St. Lawrence and Saguenay Rivers, QC; Saint John River, NB.)

Type A: Parachute

Easily observed from the surface or air; burns for at least 40 seconds.

Type B: Multi-star

Readily observed from the surface or air; burns for 4-5 seconds.

Note: some type B flares project only one star at a time. When using this single star type, 2 flares must be fired within 15 seconds of each other — you will need double the number of cartridges to meet the regulations.

Type C: Hand-held

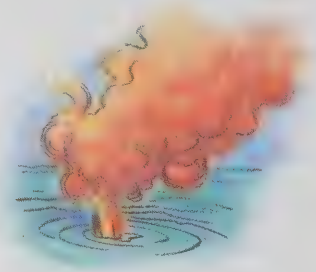
Limited surface visibility. Best for pin-pointing location during an air search; burns for at least 1 minute.

Note: avoid looking directly at flare while burning; hold it well clear of the boat and down wind.

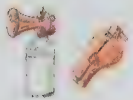
Type D: Smoke (buoyant or hand-held)

Use as a day distress signal only; burns for 3 minutes.

Note: position smoke flare down wind.



Navigation equipment



Sound signalling device

To comply with the *Collision Regulations*, sound signalling devices are required for all vessels under 12 m, if they are not fitted with a sound signalling ***appliance***. Sound signalling devices can be a pea-less whistle, compressed gas horn or electric horn.

Sound signalling appliances

Two sound signalling appliances are required under the *Collision Regulations* for vessels 12 m and over. To comply, the vessel must be fitted with a bell and horn that meet technical criteria described in the *Collision Regulations* for frequency and audible range.

Navigation lights

Navigation lights are required under the *Collision Regulations* if a vessel operates at night or in restricted visibility. If the vessel has navigation lights, they must work and be fitted in accordance with the *Collision Regulations* (*see the silhouette at the bottom of the Minimum Required Equipment by Size of Vessel pages for fitment options*).

Radar Reflectors

Radar reflectors are required under the *Collision Regulations*. Radar reflectors are a valuable piece of safety equipment because, properly positioned, they help larger, less manoeuvrable vessels detect your presence on their radar screens. For vessels under 20 m in length and for all non-metal vessels, locate reflectors above all superstructures and at least 4 m above the water (if possible).

You are not required to carry a radar reflector if it is not essential to the safety of your vessel or is impractical to mount.

Charts and Publications

Charts and various publications such as NOTICES TO MARINERS; SAILING DIRECTIONS, and the LIST OF LIGHTS, BUOYS AND FOG SIGNALS, are required under the *Charts and Nautical Publications Regulations*. Vessels under 100 tons are not required to carry these publications if the operator has sufficient knowledge of the shipping routes, navigational aids and hazards to navigate safely. **See *For Further Information* on how to obtain relevant charts and publications.**

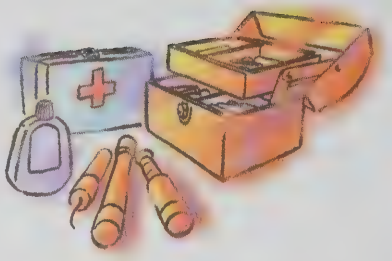
Other Suggested Items to Take Along

If you plan to be out for more than a few hours, there are a number of items that you should take with you:

- spare clothing in a watertight bag (weather can change dramatically in just a few hours and not having the proper clothing for the conditions can lead to conditions that can be serious threats to your health, such as heat-stroke and hypothermia;
- drinking water and high-energy snacks (water is the most important element here as lack of it can lead to fatigue and dehydration in a fairly short time).

Tool Kits and Spare Parts

You may need to make repairs while out on the water. Take along a tool kit, spare parts (for example, fuses, bulbs, a spare propeller, nuts and bolts, penetrating oil to free-up stuck fasteners, duct tape, spark plugs), and tools and materials to temporarily stop hull leaks.



Now that you have the tools available, do you know what to do with them? Take along the owner's manual and any other guide book you might need.

First Aid Kit

When boating, you are likely to be some distance from medical assistance and such assistance may be difficult to find when you are in unfamiliar surroundings. Take a first aid kit along with you. Store it in a dry place and replace used and outdated contents regularly.

TIP: *Would you recognize the signs and symptoms of hypothermia, heat exhaustion, an allergic reaction to insect venom or food items? Do you know how to stem bleeding, perform rescue breathing, treat shock? — If you answered no to any of these questions, take a first aid course as soon as possible. Knowing how to provide this immediate, temporary assistance can make the difference between permanent injury and full recovery, or even life and death. Contact the St. John Ambulance, Red Cross Society or Lifesaving Society for information and* ***know before you go!!***

Motor noise reduction

As of April 1, 1999, vessels fitted with a motor(s) must incorporate a device that will contribute to the reduction of the motor's noise level. This device must be in use at all times when operating within five miles of shore.

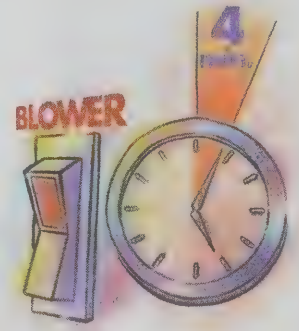
Boats constructed before January 1, 1960, or that are engaged in an official competition, formal training or final preparation for an official competition are exempt.

Fuel Safety Precautions

Any enclosed space that contains fuel-burning engines or appliances should be well ventilated. In addition to the fire hazard, fuel burning apparatis can pose an unseen threat - carbon monoxide, a colourless, odourless gas, can build up undetected below deck. Even at low concentration carbon monoxide can injure or kill those breathing it. If your boat has accommodations and is fitted with an inboard engine, generator or fuel-burning appliance, install a carbon monoxide detector close to where people will be sleeping.

Engine Start-up

Enclosed gasoline engine and fuel tank compartments must be fitted with a blower and an under way ventilation system in accordance with the *Construction Standards for Small Vessels*. New provisions of the *Small Vessel Regulations* require **the blower to be operated for at least four minutes immediately before every start-up** if your boat is so equipped.



Fuelling Procedures

Raw fuel is extremely harmful to the marine environment and the vapours create a fire hazard. **Follow these procedures, step-by-step, when refuelling. It not only makes good sense, it's the law:**

1. Moor the boat securely to prevent spillage.
2. Shut off all engines.
3. Insist that all passengers go ashore.
4. Extinguish all open flames
5. Do not smoke while refuelling.
6. Turn off electrical switches and batteries, and refrain from operating electrical devices
7. Close all windows, portholes, hatches and cabin doors.

8. Remove portable tanks from the boat before refuelling.
9. Ground the nozzle against the filler pipe.
10. Know the capacity of your fuel tank and don't overfill it; you have a duty to prevent leakage or spillage of fuel into the hull or water.
11. Wipe up any spillage and properly dispose of the cloth or towel used.
12. Operate the engine compartment blower for at least **4 minutes** immediately before starting up the gasoline engine.
13. Check for vapour odours (before starting up the engine).

Fuel-burning Appliances

The propane and butane often used on vessels for fuel-burning appliances can be hazardous and must be treated with the utmost respect. These substances are riskier than gasoline to use.

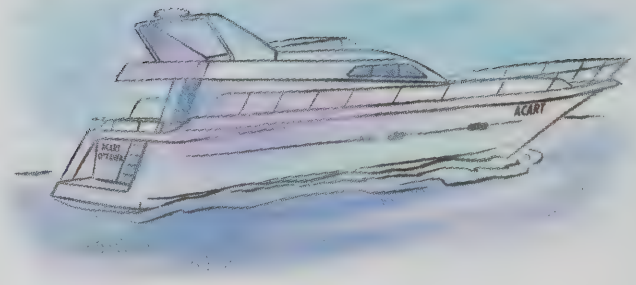
Gas fumes and leaking propane or butane are all heavier than air and will flow rapidly into the lower parts of the boat. These substances are extremely difficult to remove and are highly explosive.

Be sure that you provide adequate ventilation when using a gas-burning appliance with a pilot light. Also, ensure that any portable cooking or heating appliance is fully secured to guard against leakage due to unexpected movement of the vessel. Secure gas cylinders/tanks in an area with good ventilation.

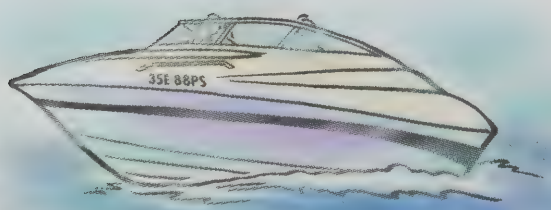
While on your boat, you must attend to an open flame heating, cooking or refrigeration system that uses gaseous fuel. Be sure that the fuel-burning equipment installation is in accordance with manufacturer's recommended practices.

Licensing, registration and identification/markings

All recreational vessels under 20 gross tons and powered by an engine 10 horsepower (7.5 kilowatts) or more must be licensed or registered, regardless of where they operate in Canada. The process is free-of-charge but mandatory. Contact Revenue Canada, Customs Service to obtain an application form (refer to the blue pages in your telephone directory to obtain the telephone number).



To identify your vessel properly, your licence number must be displayed above the water line, on both sides of the bow of your vessel. The number must be in block letters, 7.5 centimetres in height that contrast with the colour of your boat's bow.



All vessels must be documented, especially dinghies or tenders that accompany a larger boat (remember dinghies or tenders equipped with an engine 10 horsepower/7.5 kilowatts or more must be licensed separately). Lack of the correct documentation can result in delays clearing U.S.-Canada customs and could result in a fine. Make sure all boats are properly marked and documented. It's a good idea to keep your papers with the boat.

When you transfer ownership of your vessel, sign the transfer form on the reverse side of the licence and give it to the new owner. He or she must complete it and send it to the closest customs office.

Vessels of 20 gross tons or more must be registered, a different process than licensing. They carry a name, rather than a licence number.

Canadian Compliance Plate

NOTE: Plates issued in another country or by anyone other than the Canadian Government are not valid for Canadian registered or licensed boats.

On April 1, 1999, all new pleasure boats sold in Canada up to 6 m in length and capable of being fitted with an engine(s) of 7.5 kw or more are required to carry a Capacity Plate. Although requirements for Capacity Plates change from 5 to 6 m on April 1, 1999, plates issued before that date are still valid.

The capacity plate states the safe limits for the vessel of:

- engine power, which is the recommended outboard engine size.
- number of persons on board.
- maximum total load in kilograms, which includes persons, equipment, stores, fuel, etc.
- it also confirms that the vessel is built to Canadian Government *Construction Standards*.

Remember that these are maximums for fair weather operation. The number of people that can be carried safely depends on the type of boat, distribution of occupants, equipment carried, and weather and water conditions. Each operator must know and respect the limitations of their vessel. Overloading is dangerous.

All other motorized pleasure craft sold in Canada are required to display a Conformity Plate or decal stating that the vessel meets the *Construction Standards* issued by Canadian Coast Guard/ Transport Canada.

The Single Vessel Plate is issued to homebuilt boats or those boats built by a builder who is no longer able to supply a plate.

If you are buying, building or importing a boat, you are responsible for ensuring that your boat has a Capacity, Conformity, or Single Vessel Plate. Plates can only be obtained from the builder. If this is not possible, contact the Office of Boating Safety for information on how to obtain a plate and the associated fees. **See *For Further Information* for contact information.**

Safe Waterways

The laws governing safe enjoyment of Canadian waters

Rules of the road

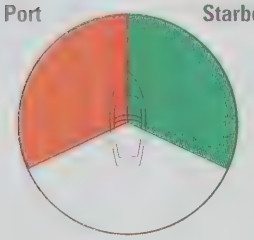
The rules of the road are established by the *Collision Regulations* and apply to every vessel in all navigable waters — from canoe to supertanker.

Maintaining a proper look-out and avoiding a collision

The *Collision Regulations* require the operator of every vessel to maintain a constant look-out. You are required to use every available means, including radar and radio (if so equipped), to determine whether there is any risk of collision with another vessel. That's not only common sense, **it's the law!**

Clear right-of-way rules exist to help vessels using the same waterways to avoid colliding with one another. The rules are very specific, and you must learn them. For example, right-of-way rules for power-driven vessels include the following:

OPERATING RULES

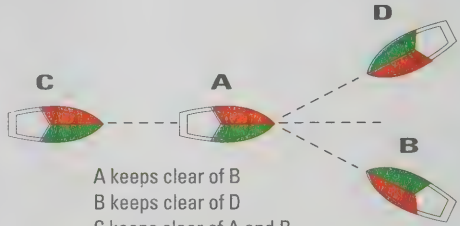


Port: If a power-driven vessel approaches within this sector, maintain with caution, your course and speed.

Starboard: If any vessel approaches within this sector, keep out of its way.

(Note: This rule may not always apply if one or both vessels are sailboats.)

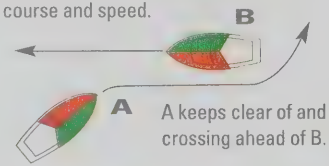
Stern: If any vessel approaches this sector, maintain with caution, your course and speed.



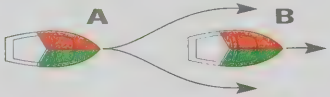
A keeps clear of B
B keeps clear of D
C keeps clear of A and B
D keeps clear of A and C

A blows one blast and alters course to starboard.

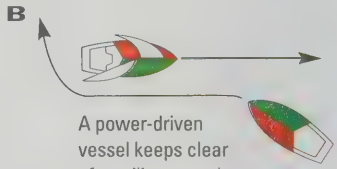
B blows one blast and alters course to starboard.



A keeps clear of and must avoid crossing ahead of B.



Any vessel overtaking another must keep clear.



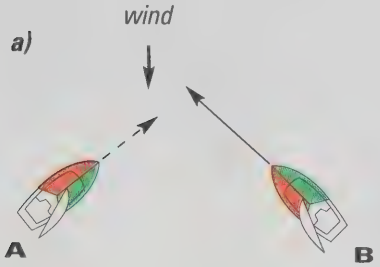
A power-driven vessel keeps clear of a sailing vessel

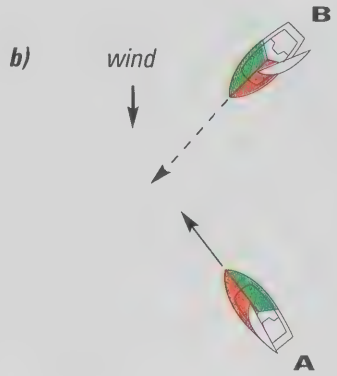
a) When each sailing vessel has the wind on a different side, the vessel that has the wind on its port (left) side shall keep out of the way of the other. In our illustration, A keeps clear of B.

If a sailing vessel has the wind on its port side and the sailor cannot determine with certainty whether the other vessel has the wind on its port or starboard side, the first vessel must keep out of the way of the other.

b) When both sailing vessels have the wind on the same side, the vessel to windward shall keep out of the way of the vessel to leeward. B keeps clear of A.

Note: *The windward side is defined as the side opposite to that on which the mainsail is carried or, in the case of a square-rigged vessel, the side opposite to that on which the largest fore-and-aft said is carried.*





Safe speed

The *Collision Regulations* specify that it is an operator's responsibility to adopt a safe speed, described as one that allows proper and effective action to be taken to avoid collision. The operator must be able to stop their boat within a distance appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions. A boat travelling at high speed requires a greater distance to stop and gives the operator less time to react to changing conditions.

To determine a safe speed for your boat, take into account all of the following factors:

1. the visibility conditions (examples: fog, mist, rain, darkness);
2. the wind, water conditions and currents;
3. the manoeuvrability of your vessel;
4. the traffic density, type of vessels in the area and their proximity; and
5. the proximity of any navigational hazards.

Operators must also proceed at a safe speed in or near an area of restricted visibility, such as entering or exiting a fog bank.

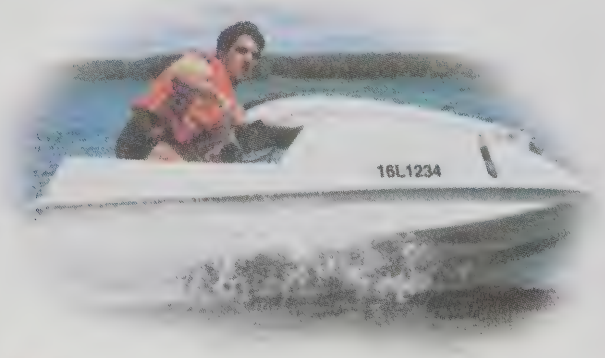
Regardless of your speed, you are also responsible for the wake created by your boat. You must not create a wake that will adversely affect other vessels, shorelines, docks and other users of the waterway (for example, swimmers and divers).

TIP: Never "buzz" or try to spray other vessels or swimmers. Some of the worst boating accidents have happened just this way when speed or distance was misjudged. It only adds to the tragedy when the two parties involved are friends or relatives.

Other dangerous behaviours to be avoided are jumping the wake of other boats, approaching too close to other boats or crossing in front of them.

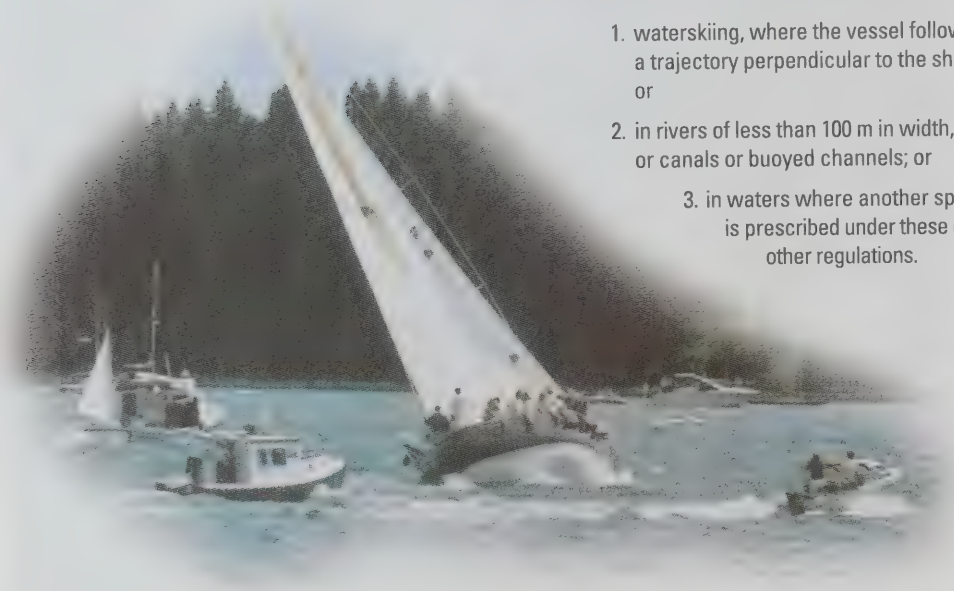
Obtain a copy of the Collision Regulations (Office Consolidation copy), study them and ensure you understand them. The Regulations can be obtained from authorized booksellers or marine supply stores that carry nautical publications.

In a narrow channel, vessels of less than 20 m in length and sailing vessels must not hamper the safe passage of a vessel that can safely navigate only in that channel. A large vessel may remind you of the requirement to give way by giving five short blasts of its horn.



Boating Restriction Regulations

The *Boating Restriction Regulations*, jointly administered with the provinces, regulate the operation of small boats on specific bodies of water in Canada. Aside from the new restriction for horsepower placed on certain age groups, these regulations contain schedules that set out operational restrictions such as speed limits and maximum horsepower or when and where certain activities, such as waterskiing, are permitted.



Shore-line speed restrictions

Certain provinces have adopted a province-wide restriction to limit speed to 10 km/h within 30 metres from shore on all waters within their boundaries, except for:

1. waterskiing, where the vessel follows a trajectory perpendicular to the shore; or
2. in rivers of less than 100 m in width, or canals or buoyed channels; or
3. in waters where another speed is prescribed under these or other regulations.

This limit is not posted. As of the date of printing, these restrictions apply in the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

How are restrictions imposed?

A local group, association or municipality that wants to implement a restriction should obtain information about application procedures from the provincial government authority designated by the federal government. The request for a restriction requires that the need for establishing a restriction be assessed and that public consultation be held at the local level. A resolution to adopt a restriction is then forwarded to the designated provincial authority which, in turn, applies for federal approval and inclusion in the *Boating Restriction Regulations*.

How are restrictions enforced?

Once a boating restriction is in place, compliance is enforced by peace officers at all levels of government or by any officer specially appointed by the Minister of Transport or the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. Sanctions are in the form of tickets or summons.

How do you read a restriction sign?

There are five types of shapes for the restriction signs. The frame colour is international orange. Signs with a section with a green border indicate that a special condition applies to the restriction. The symbol on the sign indicates the type of restriction that applies. If the sign is arrow-shaped, the restriction applies in the direction pointed by the arrow. To familiarize yourself with these signs, refer to the following examples:

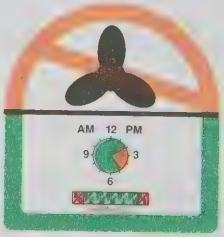
No internal combustion or steam engine permitted

Power limit

Standardized speed limit (normally 5, 10, 25, 40, 55)

No power driven vessels in the direction indicated by the arrow

No skiing north of the sign



No power vessels between the hours and days in red

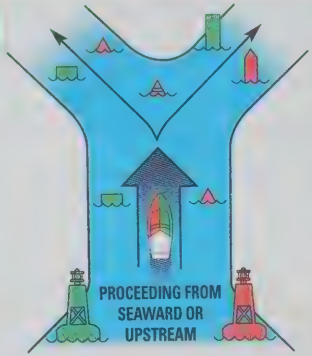
THE CANADIAN AIDS TO NAVIGATION SYSTEM

LATERAL BUOYS

PORT *(green can)*
Keep this buoy on your port (left) side when proceeding in the upstream direction.

BIFURCATION
(red and green bands)
You may pass this buoy on either side when proceeding in the upstream direction, but the main or preferred channel is indicated by the colour of the topmost band. For example: Keep this buoy on your starboard (right) side.

PORT *(green pillar)*
Keep this buoy on your port (left) side when proceeding in the upstream direction.



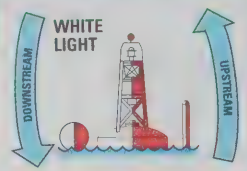
PORT *(green spar)*
Keep this buoy on your port (left) side when proceeding in the upstream direction.

STARBOARD *(red spar)*
Keep this buoy on your starboard (right) side when proceeding in the upstream direction.

STARBOARD *(red conical)*
Keep this buoy on your starboard (right) side when proceeding in the upstream direction.

STARBOARD *(red pillar)*
Keep this buoy on your starboard (right) side when proceeding in the upstream direction.

FAIRWAY



This buoy indicates safe water. Used to mark landfalls, channel entrances or channel centres. It may be passed on either side but should be kept to the port (left) side when proceeding in either direction.

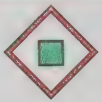
ISOLATED DANGER

An isolated danger buoy is moored on, or above, an isolated danger that has navigable water all around it. Consult the chart for information concerning the danger, (dimensions, depth, etc.). May be used to mark natural dangers such as small shoals or obstructions such as wrecks.

STANDARD DAYBEACONS

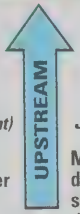
PORT HAND

When proceeding upstream, a port hand daybeacon must be kept on the vessel's port (left) side.



JUNCTION (preferred channel to right)

Marks a point where the channel divides and may be passed on either side. If the preferred channel is desired, the daybeacon should be kept on the vessel's port (left) side.



JUNCTION (preferred channel to left)

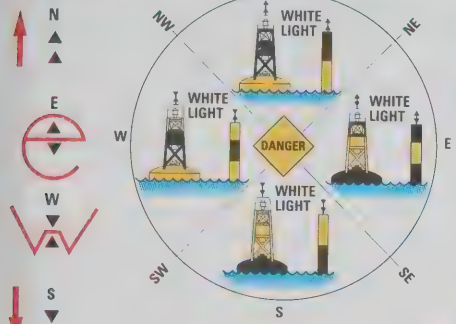
Marks a point where the channel divides and may be passed on either side. If the preferred channel is desired, the daybeacon should be kept to the vessel's starboard (right) side.

STARBOARD HAND

When proceeding upstream, must be kept on the vessel's starboard (right) side.

CARDINAL BUOYS

TOPMARKS



DESCRIPTION

- Yellow and black
- White lights — Flash characters indicated below (if equipped)
- Two conical topmarks direction of points have significance
- Black topmark cones point to the black portion(s) of the buoy
- Lettered — No numbers
- White retroreflective material

FLASH GROUPS

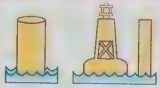
A cardinal buoy indicates that the safest water exists to the direction it indicates (ex: a north cardinal buoy indicates that the safest water exists to the north)

SPECIAL BUOYS

DESCRIPTION

- Shapes have no significance
- May be lettered — No numbers
- Cautionary, scientific and anchorage buoys may display a yellow "X" topmark
- Yellow lights — Flash characters (if equipped)
- Retroreflective material of the same colour as required markings. White buoys will display yellow material.

CAUTIONARY



A cautionary buoy marks dangers such as firing ranges, underwater pipelines, race courses, seaplane bases and areas where no through channel exists.

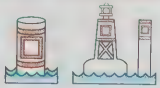
ANCHORAGE

An anchorage buoy marks the perimeter of designated anchorage areas; consult the chart for water depth.

MOORING

A mooring buoy is used for mooring or securing vessels; be aware that a vessel may be secured to such a buoy.

INFORMATION



An information buoy displays information such as locality, marina, campsite, etc.; Be guided by the information illustrated within the orange square.

HAZARD

A hazard buoy marks random hazards such as shoals and rocks. Information concerning the hazard is illustrated within the orange diamond.

CONTROL

A control buoy indicates speed limits, wash restrictions, etc.; obey the restrictions illustrated within the orange circle.

KEEP-OUT

A keep out buoy marks areas in which boats are prohibited.

SCIENTIFIC (DATA)

An Ocean Data Acquisition System buoy collects meteorological and other scientific data.

DIVING

A diving buoy marks an area where scuba or other such diving activity is in progress. Not normally charted.

SWIMMING

A swimming buoy marks the perimeter of swimming areas. May not be charted.

Waterskiing and other towing activities

Under the *Small Vessel Regulations*, the rules governing waterskiing have been expanded to cover other towing activities such as barefoot skiing, tubing, knee-boarding, and parasailing.

The previously existing requirement to have a spotter onboard remains. The following new rules have been added:

- There must be a seat available for each person being towed in case recovery is necessary. **Only personal watercraft designed to carry 3 or more people can be used for towing waterskiers.**
- Towing activities are not allowed in the period from one hour after sunset to sunrise.
- The towing vessel cannot be remotely controlled.

TIP: There are some other considerations for safeguarding the person being towed. Do not run parallel to the shore in shallow water to drop the person off: keep your distance and let the person swing into the shore. When picking up someone who has fallen into the water while being towed, turn off the engine before approaching closely.

Diving operations

Particular care must be taken when boating in waters where there are divers. Be sure you know what the "diver down" flags look like. The *Collision Regulations* require all vessels engaged in diving operatings to display the Code Flag "A" illustrated below. A red and white flag carried on a buoy is used to mark areas where diving is in progress, although divers may stray from the boundaries of the marked areas.

If you see either flag, keep well clear of the vessel and diving site, and move at slow speed.

Protecting the aquatic environment — Your responsibility

We all enjoy Canada's lakes, rivers and coastal waters. To keep them healthy and productive we need to follow good environmental boating practices. There are rules that ensure the protection of our aquatic environment. Boaters should know that it is an offence to put oil, garbage or other pollutants into the water — either accidentally or with wilful intent — and not report it immediately to the Canadian Coast Guard *(see the pollution reporting numbers on the first page of this guide).*

In some areas of Canada, sewage — or blackwater — is prohibited from being pumped overboard. The following are a list of areas in which boats are required to have holding tanks and cannot pump sewage overboard:

- Ontario: All waters
- Manitoba: the Assiniboine River in the City of Winnipeg, the Red River and Shoal Lake
- British Columbia: Shuswap, Mara and Okanagan Lakes (and a number of other waterways are being considered at the time of printing)

No matter where you boat, it is a good environmental practice and a courtesy to others who use the same waterways to dispose of your blackwater at a pump-out facility. Check with local authorities if any "no-dump" zones exist when planning your trip.

TIP: Top 10 Green Boating Tips

1. *Keep your bilge clean... don't pump oily water overboard.*
2. *Use bilge sorbents in place of detergents.*
3. *Don't pump your sewage in confined waters... use a holding tank.*
4. *Observe local and federal sewage regulations.*
5. *Bring your garbage home... don't litter.*
6. *Use detergents sparingly... even "biodegradable" cleaners are hard on the aquatic environment.*
7. *When fueling, don't top off tanks. Clean up any spilled fuel.*
8. *Use only paints approved for marine use.*
9. *Avoid shoreline erosion... watch your wake and propeller wash.*
10. *If fishing, practice catch and release.*

Report pollution when you see it!

TIP: Boaters should know that procedures for using the St. Lawrence Seaway locks differ from those outlined here — consult the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority's Pleasure Craft Guide. *To obtain your copy, write:* The Information Office, St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, 202 Pitt Street, Cornwall, Ontario K6J 3P7

Your safety in Historic Canals and Locks

When visiting one of Canada's historic canals, your vessel must be equipped with good mooring lines and have securely fastened floating fenders in sufficient numbers and size.

Boaters should be aware that there are a number of activities prohibited while in a canal. These are not limited to, but include:

- excessive noise between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.;
- fishing within 10 m of a lock or approach wharf or fishing from a bridge that passes over a navigation channel;
- diving, jumping, scuba-diving, swimming in a navigation channel or within 40 m of a lock gate or a dam;
- water-skiing or other towing activities while in a navigation channel or within 100 m of a lock structure;
- mooring a vessel to any navigation aid.

Safe passage through a lock

Regulations are in place to ensure the safety of you and other vessels while entering and exiting locks. These rules require you to:

- obey posted speed limits and watch your wake, especially when approaching a lock (wake limits have precedence over speed limits);
- keep the channel near lock gates clear so that vessels departing or entering the lock can do so safely;
- only tie up at the blue line if you wish passage through the lock (the painted blue line above and below most locks is a designated temporary tie-up area for boats;

- obey Lock Staff directing you into the lock (at a number of lock stations, a green traffic light is your signal to proceed);
- enter the lock slowly and have crew members posted at the bow and stern of the boat with mooring lines ready to use;
- if the lock is equipped with drop cables, loop vessel lines around them once safely positioned inside the lock. DO NOT TIE VESSEL LINES TO THE DROP CABLES; if the lock is equipped with floating docks you may be directed to tie-up to one inside the lock chamber;
- turn off the engine and all open-flame appliances (including pilot lights);
- do not smoke;
- leave the bilge blower on;
- tend vessel lines carefully during the lockage;
- never leave bow or stern lines unattended (here's a tip: looping a line around a deck cleat may provide extra leverage).

When the lock operation is completed and lock gates are opened, wait for staff to direct you to restart your engine. Make sure all vessel lines are returned to the boat and exit slowly. Exit in order if necessary. REMEMBER to watch out for winds, currents and other boats!

See *For Further Information* on how to contact the individual Historic Canal offices.

Safety around Dams

Boaters must be very cautious near canal dams and waste weirs where currents and undertows can be extremely dangerous. It is unsafe and illegal to dive, jump, scuba-dive, swim or bathe within 40m (130') of a dam.

For Further Information

Where to go for general boating safety information:
Contact the Boating Safety Infoline at 1-800-267-6687

Where to find the closest Canadian Coast Guard accredited basic boating safety course provider:
Visit the Office of Boating Safety web site for a course provider directory @ **www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca** or call the Boating Safety Infoline at 1-800-267-6687

Where to find the closest regional Canadian Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety:

British Columbia, Yukon Territory
Office of Boating Safety Pacific Region
25 Huron Street
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 4V9

Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Northwest Territories, Nunavut
Office of Boating Safety
Central and Arctic Region
201 N. Front Street, Suite 703
Sarnia, Ontario N7T 8B1

Quebec
Office of Boating Safety Laurentian Region
101 Boulevard Champlain, 2nd floor
Quebec, Quebec G1K 7Y7

New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island
Office of Boating Safety Maritimes Region
Foot of Parker Street, P.O. Box 1000
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 3Z8

Newfoundland
Office of Boating Safety
Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Centre (NAFC)
East White Hills Road
P.O. Box 5667
St. John's, Newfoundland A1C 5X1

Where to obtain Compliance Plates:
Office of Boating Safety, Headquarters
Canadian Coast Guard
200 Kent Street, 5th floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6
(613) 991-3128
(800) 267-6687

Where to obtain nautical charts, tide and current tables, Sailing Directions, The Canadian Aids to Navigation System, Radio Aids to Marine Navigation, and List of Lights, Buoys and Fog Signals:
Canadian Hydrographic Service
Chart Distribution Office
Ottawa, Ontario
Tel.: (613) 998-4931
Web site: **http://www.chs-shc.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/**

Canadian Hydrographic Service
Chart Distribution Office
Institute of Ocean Sciences
Sidney, British Columbia
Tel.: (250) 363-6358
Web site: **http://www.ios.bc.ca/ios/chs/**

Under an exclusive agreement with Nautical Data International Inc official digital raster charts from the Canadian Hydrographic Service are now available. These charts are an electronic picture of the paper version that includes every

detail of the official paper charts. To obtain more information about official electronic charts, contact

Nautical Data International Inc. (NDI)
(St John's, Newfoundland)
Tel.: (709) 576-0634
Web site: **http://www.ndi.nf.ca/**

Where to obtain application forms for licensing vessels:

Addresses and telephone numbers of **Revenue Canada** can be found in your local telephone directory.

Where to find information on marine weather forecasts:

Weather forecasts can be obtained from the following sources:

- channels 21B, 25B and 83B on the Atlantic Coast and Great Lakes;
- channels 21B and Wx1, 2, 3 on the Pacific Coast;
- in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax, VHF broadcasts from Weatheradio Canada (Environment Canada);
- via the internet @ **www.ec.gc.ca/weather_e.html**
- regular AM and FM radio channel forecasts;
- television weather channels and telephone services, where they exist.

Where to find information on Historic Canals:

Carillon Canal
Phone: (450) 537-3534
Internet: **parkscanada.pch.gc.ca**

Chambly Canal
Phone: (450) 447-4847
Internet: **parkscanada.pch.gc.ca**

Lachine Canal
Phone: (514) 283-6054
Internet: **lachine_mtl@pch.gc.ca**

Saint-Ours Canal
Phone: (450) 785-2212
Internet: **parkscanada.pch.gc.ca**

St. Peters Canal (Fortress Louisburg)
Phone: (902) 733-2280
Internet: **fortress.uccb.ns.ca**

Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue Canal
Phone: (514) 457-5546
Internet: **parkscanada.pch.gc.ca**

Sault Ste. Marie Canal
Phone: (705) 941-6262

Trent-Severn Waterway Marketing Partnership
Phone: (800) 663-2628
Internet: **www.ftsw.com**

Rideau Canal
Phone: (800) 230-0016
Internet: **parkscanada.pch.gc.ca**

Where to obtain marine publications and regulations:

Canada Communication Group-Publishing
Ottawa, ON K1A 0S9

Lockage, mooring and camping permits are for sale at lock stations on both Trent-Severn and Rideau canals. Mooring as well as camping space is available on a first-come, first-served basis and mooring periods vary at different lock and bridge stations. Both waterways are open seven days a week from mid-May to mid-October.

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The Office of Boating Safety, with locations across Canada, was created in April 1995, to respond to calls from the recreational boating community for an improved focus within the Coast Guard for boating matters. Working closely with that community, it delivers prevention-based programs to reduce the safety risks and environmental impacts of boating across all waters of Canada. To reach boaters, programs include public education and outreach, safety campaigns, and training others to deliver boating safety programs. A national regulatory framework establishes regulations and standards affecting boating.

Success of these programs depends on valued contributions of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, provincial and federal partners, advisory councils, the Canadian Safe Boating Council, boater and training organizations, enforcement partners, manufacturers and retailers, and the United States Coast Guard, to name a few.

Working together for safe boaters, safe boats and safe waterways.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.

Marine charts protect lives, properties and the marine environment

Canadian
Hydrographic
Service

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